MUSICAL COURIER

TERESA STICH-RANDALL:
ACCLAIMED ON TWO CONTINENTS

The triumphant return of the versatile, young American opera star, Teresa Stich-Randall, is a success story with a reverse twist.

WHEN young Teresa Stich-Randall made her North American debut on Nov. 13, 1955, in *Rigoletto* at the Lyric Theatre of Chicago, the headline in the Chicago *Tribune* read: "STICH-RANDALL IS INTRODUCED IN 'RIGOLETTO'—Gobbi and Bjoerling Are Her Co-Stars." In her review, Claudia Cassidy wrote: "A memorable newcomer . . . a lovely, lustrous lyric soprano with exquisite coloratura embellishments."

"Extraordinary," wrote Roger Dettmer of the Chicago *American*. "Miss Stich-Randall, with caramel-blonde hair and a face resembling Elisabeth Bergner proved, in addition, to be one of the two or three technically consummate singers of our time . . . a marvel of ever-accurate marksmanship wedded to a curving, caressing way with music that made one swallow in wonderment. . . . It has been my hope for 12 months—a hope not entirely kept to myself—that Miss Stich-Randall might be reintroduced to her homeland. . . ."

It was a wish long anticipated for this young American singer, a native of West Hartford, Connecticut, to return home for important engagements—in concert as well as opera. It has been a reverse twist to the usual success story, for Teresa Stich-Randall became a great success in Europe and one of the leading sopranos of the celebrated Vienna State Opera, a star about whom one Viennese music critic recently wrote: "Her voice is for us one of the most beautiful and most promising of today."

Although she first studied in the United States and after her professional debut achieved a number of outstanding successes, she then went to Europe where for several seasons she has been in constant demand in concert, opera, radio, and at the leading music festivals—throughout Germany, Austria, France, Italy, Switzerland, and Belgium.

Teresa Stich-Randall is a graduate of the Hartford School of Music, where she was a scholarship student for six years. Her success as a performing artist began at the early age of 15 when she sang the title role in *Aida*. Then in New York City she performed the role of Gertrude Stein in the world premiere of the Virgil Thomson-Stein opera *The Mother of Us All*. She also created the title role in the world premiere of Otto Luening's *Evangeline* and the leading roles in the American premiere of Ernest Bloch's *Macbeth* and of Mehul's *Stratonice*. And she sang for several seasons with the New Lyric Stage touring opera company and with some of the country's leading orchestras, among them the NBC Symphony under Toscanini.

In 1951 the gifted young soprano was awarded, by unanimous decision of the judges, first prize in the Concours International for Opera Singers in Lausanne, Switzerland. That same season she emerged as one of the winners of the Geneve Concours in Geneva, Switzerland. She sang concert and radio engagements in Switzerland and Italy, but it was in Austria that she had her biggest European triumph. That was at the Salzburg Festival in 1952, where she was "the artistic event of a Mozart matinee," under the baton of the famous Professor Paumgartner. A great success on this occasion, Miss Stich-Randall was immediately engaged by the Vienna State Opera, where since then she has been one of its stars—as Gilda in *Rigoletto*, Pamina in *The Magic Flute*, Constanza in *The Abduction from the Seraglio*, the Countess in *The Marriage of Figaro*, Liu in *Turandot*, Mimi in *La Bohème*, Antonia in *The Tales of Hoffman*, Sophie in *Der Rosenkavalier*, Micaela in *Carmen*, the title role in *Manon*, and other leading soprano parts.

Above all, it is unique that in that old-world music center, Vienna, the city of Mozart, an American should be received by press and public with such unqualified acclaim for her interpretation of Mozartean roles. For example, one of the important Viennese critics wrote: "She is an eminent artistic personality. Her marvelous voice, which she handles with flawless technique, the touching expression of her singing and the extraordinary, intelligent interpretation of the role [Pamina in Mozart's *Magic Flute*] make her an ideal interpreter of this beautiful part."

During the past few years, Miss Stich-Randall also has been singing with great popular success at the Salzburg, Aix-en-Provence, and Florence May Festivals, with the San Carlo Opera in Naples, as soloist with many of the leading orchestras of Europe, in recital, and over all of the major radio networks on the Continent. Of her German lieder, one critic recently noted that she "sang lieder by Schubert with a beautiful voice and very personable art. This is singing with the heart, in which each note is filled with feeling."

musical COURIER

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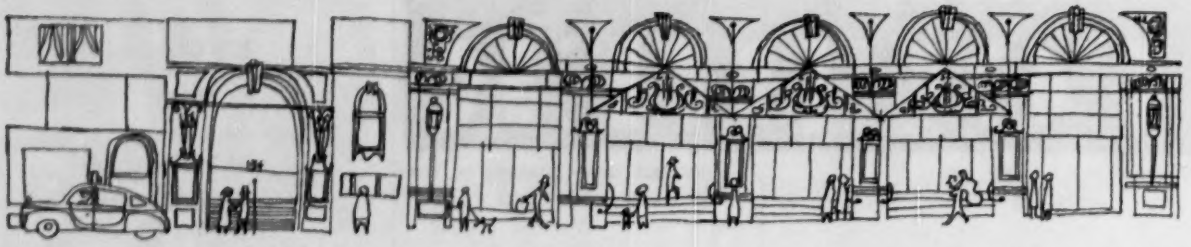
Seventy-sixth Year
January 15, 1956

ALONG 57th STREET



■ Suddenly the pile of notes and programs and scribbles is so high that we feel like toppling the whole mess into the trash basket. If we did that we could make up the shouts and murmurs drifting up from 57th Street, and what we make up might be stranger than some of the fictions or (to be kind) wishful thinking we find in press releases. We could even do away with all the false altruism purveyed by some of our less subtle press agents. Perhaps this is too harsh for what follows, but we are slowly sickening over some of the—shall we be vulgar and call it "cashing in"? Why not? . . . Anyway, it is bliss to be able to twist a dial and hear Mozart, all sorts of Mozart, and we are pleased to add to our Mozart book shelf, but we do pause a moment and think unkind thoughts when we receive a release from **WQXR** (and we love WQXR) which tells us that that station's "activities in connection with the Mozart Bicentennial Celebration" will offer a series of concerts. **Herbert Weinstock** has written and will broadcast them all the way through June 30. Also: WQXR is giving monthly Mozart chamber music concerts . . . and then comes the irk: a free "Mozart Bicentennial Medallion" for sending in three new WQXR Program Guide subscribers. You get Mozart's phiz in low relief, cut by the Austrian Mint, mounted on a wooden plaque, 3" sq., "making it suitable for hanging or for laying flat on a table or desk." It's inscribed too—but not by Mozart. You can even take the whole thing and not lay it or hang it but use it the way Krazy Kat used that old brick. How come WQXR gives away Mozart medals to get customers for its Program Guide? The Guide's a good thing, and some 64,000 subscribers fork out $1 each to testify that they think it's a good thing. So why must hard-worked Mozart work hard to solicit more customers? Maybe Ubiquitous is looking a gift horse in the mouth, but it does seem that WQXR is somehow just touching its magnificent Mozart program with gracelessness by using the Master's face as a come on for a product which doesn't really need that kind of come on. . . . **High Fidelity's** Mozart Anniversary Issue (January) is absolutely necessary for anyone who loves music. It's fat with items, pictures, all sort of things to make you happy this Mozart year. What a wonderful job **Roland Gelatt,** special ed. for this issue, has done. And how lucky he was to have **Simon Bourgin** (stationed in Vienna) working with him. We liked especially "Twenty Analysts in Search of a Soul," by Nathan Broder; also "W. A. Mozart—A Pictorial Essay." . . . Also, but nothing much to do with Mozart Year, get, if you can find it, **Variety's** enormous Anniversary Number. Hasn't been anything like it, probably won't be again in our day. It's definitely the sort of item (think of calling anything so prodigious an item!) you will want to keep. . . . Back to Mozart: all the 57th Sts. of the world are buzzing over **NBC TV's** "Magic Flute." No matter what it turns out to be, NBC did not stint itself artistically. Involved were: **Balanchine;** the usuals such as **Chotzinoff** (his series on the Maestro, in *Holiday*, is that rare writing which actually makes you feel that you know the person you are reading about) and **Peter Herman Adler; Rouben Ter-Arutunian; Lincoln Kirstein,** special consultant; **W. H. Auden & Chester Kallman,** translators; **Leontyne Price; Laurel Hurley; Adelaide Bishop; Yi-Kwei Sze** . . . a long list of notables in what looks like the year's outstanding single Mozart operatic event. That's what TV can attempt at its best.

■ Big hopes at the **City Center** right now. That rumor we relayed, about **Iturbi** taking over the direction was just someone's articulated bad dream. The fact is, as all who read now know, that the new conductor-manager will be **Erich Leinsdorf,** a fine conductor—but what about the manager part of your new title, Mr. Leinsdorf? It's the manager part which does the conductor part in, at our City Center. Can you really cope with being the Center's manager? We hope you can, because then we might get some really good results. And, please, Mr. Leinsdorf, return "Cinderella" to being "Cenerentola," just the way it was when we first saw it. Most of all, don't forget: the Center should not try to compete with the Met—ever. Even when the Met is competing with the Center, as it is in announcing "La Perichole" for next season. This Offenbach is a small work, a delightful one. **Jennie Tourel** is solely responsible for its continued life in this city. **(Maggie Teyte** helped keep it alive years ago, but Jennie's sustained it, programmed from it, will be singing it at Town Hall soon.) It's the sort of work which wouldn't be quite as lost in the Center (although that house isn't ideal for it) as it could be at the Met. **Bing** says the Met will be doing it in a **Maurice Valency** translation, staged by **Cyril Ritchard,** designed by the Met's court designer, **Rolf Gerard,** during the Christmas holidays, come Dec. next. **Patrice Munsel** is to sing this extremely delicate, intensely French work which requires the greatest style from its executante. What an opportunity for Mr. Bing, Commander in the Order of the British Empire, to ask Miss Tourel to come to the Met to sing this work. Miss Tourel is acknowledged supreme mistress of the genre: she has made "La Perichole" her role. She has a following who beg for arias from it whenever she appears at Town Hall. The Met's '56-'57 season looks superb—what with the "Ring" restored, the great divas readying themselves in their corners, a marvelous young conductor ambitious to scale heights, even do a "Tristan" if an Isolde can be found (and **Schippers** *is* the boy to do the "Perichole," if **Monteux** isn't available). . . .

■ . . . And while we're at the Met: what's this odd tale we've heard about an iron door being set up between the house and the backstage proper, on the 39th St. side? Purpose of door, we were told, is to exclude backstage visitors *after* the performances; new system, we were told, is to permit each artiste to have only *1* (one) visitor and that *1* (one) by written permission? All sounds too crazy to be true, almost as odd as the current curtain call ruling at the Met. . . . Odd and vexing that the Queen honored **Bing** while neglecting (at least we've seen no mention of any honors for him) **David Webster,** who does manage Covent Garden Opera and Sadler's Wells Ballet and who has done a remarkable job of public relations for the Empire since the 1939 War. We don't quite understand why Mr. Bing got accoladed this way. His Glyndebourne and Edinburgh jobs were fine, but Webster's been working in behalf of British music and ballet for about a decade, and only for Britain. . . . Well, these are mysterious judgments which result in rewards from above. . . . Does the future **Grace Grimaldi** realize that **Marlene Dietrich** is to make a movie in Monaco, come April? Maybe the future princess can contract Miss Dietrich to sing at the wedding. We suggest "Knock'd 'Em in the Old Kent Road." See you in Feb.

UBIQUITOUS

By
FERDE
GROFÉ

AND THEN I WROTE... AMERICAN MUSIC

Known and loved as a composer and champion of American music, Ferde Grofé is perhaps best known for his "Grand Canyon Suite" and "Mississippi Suite." His major compositions have been recorded on Columbia, RCA, Capitol, and London labels, and are published by Robbins Music Corporation of New York.

FREQUENTLY I have been asked how I happened to write "highly American compositions" such as the "Grand Canyon Suite," and then the happy suggestion has followed that I seem to have captured in music what that person may have felt upon actually seeing these great canyons. While such comments may provide the raw stuff that many a swelled head is made of, I have always figured that the questions and the favorable comments simply illustrate one thing—that I am not alone in seeing and feeling the wonderful music that is right here in our America, this music that surges forth from our land.

This music is mine only in the technical sense that a copyright has been filed away with my name on it. The sounds, the sights, the sensations revealed in my compositions are simply those which are common to all Americans. I hope that, always, the only line that separates Grofé from you is the lucky fact that I have been trained to jot down these musical impressions.

About this training . . . in retrospect, it seems that the training should have come about rather easily and quite naturally. It should have, for my mother was a musician of some note, my grandfather an associate of Victor Herbert, and my uncle a concertmaster. The path of least resistance, however, is not always the one sought out by impressionable youngsters, and as a teenager I temporarily side-stepped this heritage to get out and see America for myself. Looking back, I have noted that before I returned to music, I worked variously as a bookbinder, truck driver, usher, newsboy, elevator operator, lithographer, typesetter, and steelworker. I am extremely grateful for the wonderful insight which these tasks gave me, for later I wrote compositions such as "Symphony in Steel," a tone poem which had in it much of the rhythm and keen physical awareness which is shared by everyone who has ever been a steelworker, and later, "Tabloid Suite," which had in it much of what I and many others felt and learned as newspaper workers. Of the other compositions that followed—"Broadway at Night," "Mississippi Suite," "Metropolis," "Henry Ford," "Knute Rockne," "Death Valley Suite"—all reflected the many facets of American life and land which were there for me to draw on. The odd jobs I have mentioned, together with a young man's desire to "keep moving" across this great country of ours, were the agents which later crystalized each of these experiences for me in terms of music.

Of all the compositions I have written, two stand out because they seem to reveal an extraordinarily close kinship with this land of ours, and also because the music for these two compositions was revealed to me slowly and with such care that I often thought that, somehow, I was being tested.

One composition, of course, was the "Grand Canyon Suite." This had taken root in my heart and mind years before I wrote it, when I lived in Arizona, roaming the desert and mountain country as an itinerant pianist. This was first-hand experience for me, for I knew the terrain of the Grand Canyon region, its animal and bird life, its people and their habits and customs. The richness of the land and the rugged optimism of its people had fired my imagination. I was determined to set it all to music some day.

The other composition, the "Hudson River Suite," is of more recent vintage. I was born in New York and have traveled up and down this great river, so this was a "natural" for me. The fascinating folklore associated with Hendrik Hudson's river and the many moods of the present New York scene have always been a great source of pleasure to me. Last year Andre Kostelanetz commissioned me to write of such a scene. It was a labor of love.

All of the compositions I have mentioned here were born of sights, sounds, and sensations common to all of us. I think I have spoken of America in this music simply because America spoke to me . . . just as it has spoken to you.

If I have succeeded in capturing some part of the American musical spirit, I am grateful that my training and experience have enabled me to do so. But we must always realize that there is much more to hear, for our land is rich in music. If you listen you can hear it right now . . . our music . . . surging forth . . . singing up to everyone of us.

WOMEN AT WORK

By MARY CRAIG

MILDRED DILLING

"AND I HEARD THE SOUND OF HARPERS . . ."

HANDSOME **Mildred Dilling,** when scrutinizing new portrait studies of herself, paused at one showing the artist in a form-revealing gown at the front end of her new Lyon and Healy harp. "My, my," she said, "I look like the figurehead of a ship!" Not an inappropriate comment when one realizes that as one of the first five renowned harp recitalists on today's music roster, Miss Dilling has run up more mileage and played on more farflung tours than any other two combined. It was only last year, while fulfilling her annual European orchestral and radio commitments, that she opened up a new concert series in Scandinavia, playing to an SRO house successfully in one city where there had not been a solo harp recital since around 1746. I have before me a snapshot of Mildred Dilling taken this summer in Greece. The lady really goes places. But, unfortunately, although Miss Dilling is center-stage and in focus (and when is she not?), the Acropolis is leaning (like Pisa) on its left ear and there isn't a harp in view.

Mildred Dilling is famous as the lady who took the harp out of its gentle glissando position in the orchestra, from under the candlelight and silk draperies of drawing-room romance, and made it box office in the fiercely competitive concert field. She scoffs a bit at the prevalent ideas of this angelic instrument, although with her heavy hair of spun gold and her lovely gowns she makes an alluring stage picture. But as for soft white hands and drooping grace, she calls attention to the pulling strength required for clear timbre of the strings and the unmistakable callouses on the fingertips of the player. As to the lovely flowing gowns, she admits that she sacrifices efficiency to beauty in that respect. She invented a little drawstring arrangement that pulls the wide skirts back for pedal freedom. It's true that on occasion she has forgotten this and has bowed and swept offstage still kilted up on the side. But that's a small price to pay for the luxurious satins and velvets that look so well under a spotlight against a harp of gold.

Born in Marion, Indiana, Miss Dilling began piano lessons at age 6 but soon fell in love with the harp. When she was 12 she was given a small harp that had once belonged to Evangeline Booth. It was heavily mud-spattered and she still feels that she cleaned away something historical. This was the start of a collection now numbering over 40 harps of every size and shape. There is the Celtic Clarsach, a 100-year-old Burmese bow harp, a medieval minnesinger's harp, one contrived by Marie Antoinette's craftsmen, Cousineau, unique specimens from Mexico, Africa, and the Far East, and Miss Dilling's own recital harps, retired after five or six years of hard service. "I can't explain my love for the harp," she once said. "Though very becoming to a woman, it should be a man's instrument. I'm sure a man invented it—some bowman who plucked a string and then tried two strings to his bow. A woman would have preferred two beaux to her string!"

Possibly one of the most interesting of her instruments is the 18th-century harp brought to America by Karl von Loesen, son of the Bürgermeister of Hamburg who came as a stowaway during Revolutionary times. Under the name of "Carl Loss," he prospered as a New York City surveyor, receiving in part payment 80 acres of land stretching north and east from 50th Street and Fifth Avenue. This property he exchanged for a farm in New Jersey. His still saddened descendants were almost happy to give his harp to Miss Dilling—who, coincidentally, lives, between tours, in New York City on a spot in the "Loss" grant. Here in a high-up apartment (E. 52nd St.), looking out and across the city, she has a part of her collection—a forest of choice harps, among which is the cherished Loss instrument. The rest are at the artist's Woodstock (N. Y.) home, which she manages to visit between concerts or in summer before or after a vacation at Etretat, near Le Havre. Sojourn in France became something of a habit after Mildred Dilling's European study with Henrietta Renie, her Paris debut at the Salle Erard, and subsequent engagements at the Trocadero and the Salle Gaveau which inaugurated the annual overseas tours.

"I've been concertizing since I was 13 years old," Miss Dilling stated. And according to the record, she is one of the most heavily booked recitalists on the roster. Seventy concerts a season in this country; bookings on the Continent, in the British Isles, Scandinavia; solo recitals, broadcasts and guest-with-orchestra; major church musicales, university lecture recitals, and TV—she takes them all in stride. Her itinerary has stretched to Central and South America, to the Caribbean, and overseas to Hawaii. She does a little teaching on the side; probably her most entertaining pupil is Harpo Marx. The apochryphal story about Harpo is that he walked up to the dignified artist after hearing her tweak a string or two in an instrument shop, and said, "Lady, can you learn me that?" She could and did!

Called the "Great Lady of the Harp," Miss Dilling was chosen to represent *the harpist* in the 24 great-musician series featured by Artist Films. Partly because of her unquestionable beauty and witty charm, she was sensational. But mostly because she can really play with technical skill and lustrous tone, the press reported: "fresh magic!"

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WHEN a primadonna has had a successful career, starting in her teens and encompassing the top flights of theatre and concert in Europe and in the U. S. A., when she has married and happily reared a family, when there is comfort and all the small luxuries of living, wouldn't you think the fortunate artist would say, "I've done my stint"? But **Nina Gordani,** still young and vital, doesn't see life in terms of flowery beds of ease. Knowing from her own experience all the exigencies, compromises, and fluctuations of the recital field, she has chosen to assume the responsibilities of personal representative work and is becoming one of the best known of the independents in her line.

Word began to come in on artists and engagements—I had known her as a vocalist—and so, one shining day,

NINA GORDANI

Opera Workshop production of La Traviata *at the Manhattan School (Janet Schenck, Director).*

I took a bus ride to visit Mme. Gordani. Her office, cum secretary, is in her multi-roomed apartment looking out over the lakes and dells of Central Park—a breathtaking view. Inside there was some pleasant undersurface confusion. The young daughter of the house was within a few days of her very elaborate marriage, and it looked for awhile as though recitals and such were not in perspective. But Nina Gordani is a born manager. I found myself bulwarked with piles of press and photograph albums, with lists of young artists and group attractions, and with an opportunity to observe and admire the beauty and comfort of the Gordani home. (I also had an excellent lunch, carefully non-caloric for my benefit!)

As Mme. Gordani stated, she had the experience of top theatre—even of singing numbers on a bill at the Palace in days when that engagement was an accolade—she toured Continental Europe, sang costume recitals, did musical comedy (she was a star dancer!), and ranged from serious lecture programs to night club dates. Her press clippings fill a library of volumes! "The secret of artist success," she said, "is good appearance and good performance. The manager's success depends on more complicated factors. One must understand the *needs* of the buying group; there must be a proper program offered to the proper place; the manager must know even better than the committee or local representative what will 'go,' and what is futile. There must be the right presentation and right advertising. The group attraction must be a good team, and the solo artist must be schooled in every item from dress to program timing. To be a good manager one should be able to *think* for the artist and still think *like* an artist. This takes experience and understanding."

When pressed as to the reason for her unneeded work and worry, she said that she had so much joy in her music activities that she felt to pass it on, to get engagements and bookings for young artists, would keep her own career alive. "It's not frustration over stopping, it's not benevolence on my part. It's a business proposition, but it's also real fun."

On her list of Music, Entertainment, Lectures, she includes speakers on World Problems, World Affairs, Reports from the Far East, from India, on Economics and Statesmanship. There are Travelogue series and humorists, writers, commentators, news correspondents. On the music side there is Carol Longone with her vocally illustrated Operalogues; musicologists like Marion Keighley Snowden in Old English music on the Virginal. Mme. Gordani offers specialists in creative arts, designing, playwriting, selling. Name artists are on the recital list, balladeers, dancers, puppeteers. There is lovely Ladda Bolger in Irish Ballads, and the Markowski-Cedrone piano duo, plus choral and theatre ensembles for adult and also for child audiences.

From the talent warehouse Nina Gordani has gathered a rich array of talent, and the clubs and colleges of the country will profit equally with the chosen career artists who are under her alert direction.

EASTWARD IN EDEN

THE splendid plant of the Manhattan School of Music, its comprehensive training, and its far-reaching results in musicianship and artistry have grown out of the inspiration and executive genius of **Janet D. Schenck,** the director. Mrs. Schenck disclaims most of the credit. "There is a fine Board of Trustees and an outstanding faculty," she reminds us. Which only means that she also possesses, besides her earned scholastic degrees, the gift (see Dale Carnegie) of making and keeping friends plus selective judgment in choice of co-workers.

However, since she prefers it this way, let's take a look at the School. It must have been nearly a decade ago that, on assignment one winter's night, I trekked northeast past the blocks of luxury apartments, past the El with its avenue of shops and tenements, towards the wide grey river moving darkly between Manhattan and the Queens shore. In East 105th Street I came rather suddenly upon a group of connecting, clean-lined buildings with an air of permanence and well-being. It was "orchestra concert" night and the entrances were jammed with enthusiasts trying to make their way into the School auditorium. Aided by a press pass, I succeeded. The concert presented as soloist with the Student Orchestra—and that is a misnomer, they played like young professionals—a pianist-composer in his own composition. The whole was so impressive in terms of accuracy, vigor, and musicality that, despite a heavy reviewing schedule, I requested tickets for other Manhattan School of Music events, and have gone seasonally for opera workshop (they staged several in Kaufmann Auditorium to meet attendance demands), solo and orchestral concerts, madrigal recitals, and choral presentations.

I spent a day recently on a "guided tour" of the School (plus an appetizing luncheon from the student cafeteria), going through the offices, classrooms, study and discussion halls, through the library with its softly panelled walls and rehearsal rooms, past Hubbard Hall where a brass choir alternated with strings in difficult passages—"They are having their reading lesson" murmured the Director—and back to the main building to salute Jonel Perlea, John Brownlee, Vittorio Giannini, Hugh Ross, John Wummer, and many others eminent in performance and pedagogy. The faculty roster is imposing and the curriculum is diversified—commencing with Preparatory Training and, tailored to the requirements of the individual student, offering academic courses in addition to music study, leading to Master of Music and Bachelor of Music degrees plus the less rigorous Diploma and Post-Graduate Diploma. I believe one of the finest departments is that of Composition in the course leading to the Master of Music degree. The musicology supple-

(Continued on page 14)

Horace Lo Piano, Conductor

THE "OVER SIXTY" ORCHESTRA

The music program of the Sirovich Day Center in New York's Lower East-Side is giving our "over sixty" population an opportunity to "grow younger in spirit, health, and mental attitudes."

By ALFRED K. ALLAN

CAN people over 60 years of age still actively participate in music programs? Behind the modest-looking facade of the Sirovich Day Center in New York City this question is being dramatically answered.

The answer is personified by the center's "Over Sixty" Orchestra, a dynamic linking of music and mental health, and the first orchestra of its kind in this country. Each member of this group is at least 60 years old; in fact the average age of the members is seventy! This orchestra is part of the over-all "pilot" program being activated at the Center as a vivid example for other communities to follow. Through this effort the Center is seeking more workable ways of giving New York's "over sixty" population an ideal opportunity "to express skills and talents of which they may have been unaware," so that they may "gain a feeling of adequacy, security, and continued usefulness in the community."

The Center flourishes in the midst of New York's crowded lower East Side tenement district. Its building at 203 Second Avenue has become an inspiring and familiar sight to the people of the neighborhood. Since its grand opening, on Dec. 19, 1949, the Center has moved with relentless speed toward the fulfillment of its announced purpose—to enrich the lives of men and women over 60, regardless of their race, religion, creed, or income, through recreational and occupational therapy.

The lion's share of credit for the establishment of this project goes to Harry A. Levine, Director of Special Services for the Aged in the New York City Department of Welfare. And it was Mr. Levine, a few months after the Center's opening, who suggested to Miss Frances King, the Center's Director, that the formation of an orchestra exclusively for people over 60 be tried out.

Miss King wasted no time in following through on the suggestion. The first order of business was to find interested members. She sounded out the Center's membership, which then numbered about 35, and found two people who liked the idea and who were to become the Orchestra's founding fathers. One of the two had once played in John Philip Sousa's famous band, but neither had touched a musical instrument for about 40 years, and they were eager to fill this musical void in their lives. Miss King purchased one instrument from a local pawn shop, and an expensive violin was donated by one of the Center's sponsors.

In the four years that have passed since this humble beginning, the "Over Sixty" Orchestra has grown impressively in personnel and stature. The membership is over eighteen now, representing eight different nationalities. The oldest member, who plays the tambourine and cymbals, is 77 years old.

Donations of instruments have poured into the Center, several from such luminaries of the musical world as Harry Salter and Gus Schirmer. The Orchestra performs frequently at many of the city's charitable institutions, as well as on radio programs and at local hospitals. To add to their triumphs the Orchestra has given three highly successful concerts at the Center. As Miss King says proudly, "They give joy, not only to themselves but to the community."

The varied backgrounds of the Orchestra's members lend added importance to this project. Some were professional musicians, others were only amateurs, some had never played before. One used to play the vaudeville circuit, another was a piano tuner, another had many years before played in an Italian Army band, still another had been a prominent member of the Metropolitan Opera Company. Even the porter at the Center has become a devoted member of the Orchestra.

The Orchestra's present leader, Horace Lo Piano, had been active in both the Cleveland Orchestra and the Pittsburgh Symphony. But this was over 12 years ago. When he came to the Center he was immediately attracted to the Orchestra, resumed his music life by becoming a trombone player in the Orchestra, and seven months later, confidence in himself fully regained, he assumed his present duties as the Orchestra's conductor.

Many of the members were prevented from taking an active part in music programs earlier in their lives because they had no time. Others had been active for a while but because of economic and personal reasons were compelled to abandon their musical interests. Tancreti De Santis, 62, hadn't played his violin for 14 years. Sevrineo Hernandez, 64, had put down his clarinet, he believed, for good, back in 1944. Now, in later years, their music and their lives were being meaningfully restored.

This is perhaps best illustrated by the Summer Music Festival, held on June 30, 1952, when the Orchestra performed works by Brahms, Bizet, and Verdi. About 250 people, young and old, filled the Bandshell at Hudson Park in New Rochelle, New York, to witness this, the Orchestra's first such festival. There had been some apprehension on the part of the concert's sponsors about how successful such a public performance of the orchestra might be. The Orchestra's members, consequently, were anxious and nervous, but this anxiety intensified rather than dampened their determination. The long and enthusiastic applause they received at the concert's conclusion echoed resoundingly through the park. There was no doubt of the orchestra's complete acceptance by the audience. The value of such an orchestra, limited to people over 60 years of age, had been tested and proved worthwhile.

Music activity at the Sirovich Day Center is being constantly expanded. In addition to the "Over Sixty" Orchestra, there are now music appreciation discussion groups, a glee club, and a Hawaiian ukelele, guitar, and mandolin orchestra. Mirrored against this successful music program, the Center can truly be considered a significant means by which "older people grow younger in spirit, health, and mental attitudes."

Henry Rapi Arda

OISTRAKH (*left*) *and* MITROPOULOS *discuss a point in rehearsal for three-concerto program with N. Y. Philharmonic.* (*See review, page* 12.)

THE NEW YORK CONCERT AND OPERA BEAT

DR. HENRY W. LEVINGER, *Chief Critic and Editor*

METROPOLITAN OPERA

"La Forza del Destino," Dec. 16, E—The Met's first performance this season of Verdi's "La Forza del Destino" was somewhat disappointing—at least vocally. Zinka Milanov, whose beautiful voice we have so often admired, was slow to reach her top form in the role of Leonora, and it was not until the final act that she sounded like herself. Until then there was pitch insecurity and a certain roughness in her voice. Josef Metternich likewise improved as the evening wore on, and his portrayad of Don Carlo became more convincing in the second and third acts. In many respects the best vocal performance of the evening was turned in by tenor Kurt Baum, who was replacing Mario Ortica in the role of Don Alvaro. In fact, Mr. Baum seems to be in fine form this season. Otto Edelman did not add a great deal to the role of Padre Guardiano. The remainder of the cast was as follows: Gerhard Pechner as Fra Melitone, Margaret Roggero as Preziosilla, Thelma Votipka as Curra, Alessio De Paolis as Trabucco, and George Cehanovsky as a surgeon.

Conductor Fritz Stiedry was in the pit, and he too seemed to have his troubles for the evening. The ensemble between stage and pit left a great deal to be desired. Although the performance was not top flight, it was good to see this controversial opera back in the repertoire. G. W.

"Don Pasquale," Dec. 23, E—Three debuts, a new ballet piece, and an operatic revival marked this date. A brilliant audience greeted the novelties with approving applause. When "Don Pasquale" was first proposed as the opus to be sponsored by the National Council of the Metropolitan Opera Associates, a severe, important-looking gentleman rose in the meeting and asked "Why?" It is still a question. For the delectable Donizetti score (with its imbecilic plot), with all the lavish decor with which the Met surrounds the production, would unquestionably appear and sound to better advantage on the stage of a more intimate theatre. Also, I do not believe this opera is as good "box office" as some other tales of blood and curses. Aside from the honied tunes, the always delightful "yes-no" duet and the florid airs of Norina, its chief musical distinction lies in the atmospheric orchestral patterns. Thomas Schippers, in Metropolitan debut as a conductor, was the real star of the evening. This young man, hardly past his mid-twenties, is, one fears, a genius. If he can hold steady under deserved adulation, he may become a great conductor. Currently, he possesses superlative assets for such a career; among them, musical intuition and control. Tempering the instrumental texture to the over-light-voiced cast, he was able to establish continuity and, minus distortion, to afford moments of climactic excitement. Mr. Schippers evidenced particular flexibility in his direction of the ballet piece which preceded the opera. But more of this later.

In the *Don Pasquale* title role was Fernando Corena, using his warm-toned voice well and acting the part with notable histrionic flair. As the young widow, Norina, Roberta Peters offered the most telling singing of the performance, employing a "carry ing" limpid quality of voice and a fluent scale. Fine technic and poised projection made the Ernesto of Cesare Valleti outstanding. Frank Guarrera, a bit thick voiced, was the ingenious Dr. Malatesta, while Alessio De Paolis buffo-ed around unoriginally as the Notary. Costumes were fresh and colorful, and the innovation (for the Met) of a revolving stage was entertaining. Scenery and furniture, credited to the Met's own workshop and designed by Wolfgang Roth, were gaily appropriate to the period of the farce.

There is not much to be said about the Zachary Solov ballet. Titled "Soirée," it has the innocuous motif of a Grand Ball with a Hostess (Margaret Black) receiving her guests, among whom are a young couple, the Girl, danced by Mary Ellen Moylan (Met debut), and the Boy, Oleg Briansky (Met debut), with Adriano Vitale, a Spaniard, in a Bolero and Tarantella with the Corps de Ballet. At his best in Victorian genre, Cecil Beaton has designed the sets and costumes with a nostalgic feeling, and has framed the whole stage in a sort of lace Valentine edging, which is very effective. The elegance and grace of a crystalline epoch were exquisitely conveyed. Choreography was neat and artfully charming but not a particularly important contribution to dance repertory. However, enchanting Mary Ellen Moylan, with sustained imaginative poise and flexible use of her truly wonderful feet, executed the intricate patterns of her dances with the spirited zest and pliant control of a terpsichorean star. Mr. Briansky was at his best, I felt, in the pas de deux with Miss Moylan. He seemed to take his debut anxiously, and while he showed excellent attributes and good stance, he eased into a more suave delivery in the latter episodes of the piece. The Rossini tunes, as revised and scored by Benjamin Britten, reminded me of old wine in new, exotically shaped bottles, occasionally giving the old-timer a shock, though pleasant, of surprise. All in all, this was an entertaining evening, expensively and musically lush. M. C.

"Samson et Dalila," Dec. 29, E—Saint-Saens' "Samson et Dalila" was given its first presentation at the Met since 1953. Pierre Monteux conducted in careful, authoritative style, which occasionally lacked spontaneity. This work is a glorified oratorio, imbued with a strong sense of pageantry. For this reason it is not easy to realize in performance the excitement of a continuous musico-dramatic presentation. The sets were effectively designed, and the staging and disposition of the large choral forces, for the most part, were competently directed and colorful.

Risë Stevens as Dalila turned in a striking histrionic characterization, bold in outline, although at times missing the acme of sinuous subtlety necessary to the Dalila approach. Miss Stevens' tonal emission was uneven. Well resonated throughout the middle register, the tone lacked virility and projection in the lower register. Ramon Vinay as the luckless Samson was an heroic figure, and his vocal adequacy was much in evidence during the second and third acts. Martial Singher was dramatically impressive as the High Priest; a smooth, fluent vocalism was always at his command. James McCracken as the Messenger, and Calvin Marsh as the Second Philistine, made highly acceptable first appearances in these secondary roles. The cast was completed by Norman Scott, Nicola Moscona, and Gabor Carelli.

The bacchanal in the temple of Dagon was a brilliant spectacle of exotic color and frenzied action which, with the demolition of the temple, brought the opera to a grand finale. L. C.

"Fledermaus," Dec. 31, E—To the sounds of Johann Strauss' perennial "Fledermaus," the ensemble of the Metropolitan Opera and a sell-out audience bade farewell to the old year. The production of this classic operetta still is handsome, and Garson Kanin's stage direction, now supervised by Robert Herman, holds up well. So did the singers, headed by Eleanor Steber, Charles Kullman, Virginia MacWatters (the latter pinch-hitting for the indisposed Patrice Munsel), and in other leading parts Thomas Hayward, Jarmila Novotna, John Brownlee, Clifford Harvuot, and Paul Franke. Mary Ellen Moylan, Oleg Briansky, and the Corps de Ballet danced the Acceleration Waltz in the second act and, as a surprise guest, Renata Tebaldi brought down the house with an aria from Cilea's "Adriana Lecouvreur," a song by Turina, and a Sicilian folksong. Jack Mann, as Frosch the jailer, delighted the crowd with his antics. Tibor Kozma conducted a well-paced performance which released the audience into the new year in the best of spirits. H. W. L.

Lily Pons—Gala Performance, Jan. 3, E—Lily Pons, in a program celebrating her 25th anniversary as coloratura prima donna at the Metropolitan Opera House, was generally in full command of the vocal and histrionic assets that have charmed the music world during the past quarter century. Still retaining her youthful looks, her gracious manner, and her personal appeal, Miss Pons brought to an adoring audience, vocally and artistically, everything and more than it had anticipated.

The anniversary performance included the second act of Verdi's "Rigoletto," the Mad Scene from Donizetti's "Lucia di Lammermoor," followed by a group of several famous arias. In the "Rigoletto" presentation, the little coloratura encompassed, as in the past, Gilda's music with a highly commendable freshness and fluency of tone, combined with an effective sense of the dramatic. Her singing in the Mad Scene and her faultless impersonation of the demented Lucia were a fitting culmination of artistry and vocalism of the many appearances made by this singer in the same role during the past 25 years. At the con-

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clusion of the scene her enthusiastic listeners accorded her a rousing, sustained ovation seldom heard in any of our auditoriums.

Before her rendition of the concluding group of arias, numerous officials of the Metropolitan and fellow artists, including Lauder Greenway, Rudolf Bing, Jan Peerce, Langdon Van Orden, and John Brownlee offered, their felicitations to Miss Pons, and a multitude of beautiful gifts were given to her as tokens of their friendship and heartfelt admiration. It was in all respects a gala occasion. L. C.

CARNEGIE HALL

Symphony of the Air; Renata Tebaldi, Jussi Bjoerling, soloists; **Leonard Bernstein,** conducting; Dec. 20, E—The very fine playing of the Symphony of the Air, athletically led by Leonard Bernstein, served as only a framework for the soloists of the evening, the highly publicized soprano Renata Tebaldi, and an audience-favorite tenor Jussi Bjoerling. So it happened that the "Meistersinger" Prelude of Wagner, the Beethoven Leonora Overture, No. 3, and the atmospheric Four Sea Interludes from Britten's "Peter Grimes" fitted into the program as beautifully presented passing episodes. The interest of the concert focussed on the vocalists, who were heard in three operatic excerpts — the Act I duet from "Tosca," the Farewell Tomb scene from "Aida," and the final lovers' meeting in "Manon Lescaut." In these, Miss Tebaldi displayed all the admirable assets of her singing artistry, the pure, floating pianissimos, the delicacy of style, showing also a gain in clarity and control in the forte passages over her last season's delivery. Mr. Bjoerling, an admirable co-artist, sang with the uniquely lustrous and appealing quality that distinguishes the timbre of his notable voice. There was dramatic power, when needed, and always accuracy and impeccable good taste. The "teamwork" was excellent and the whole offered the kind of tonal texture too seldom heard in recital.

M. C.

. . . a remarkably satisfactory evening of operatic singing.
H. C. S., N. Y. TIMES

Both artists provided distinguished singing. F. D. P., N. Y. HERALD TRIBUNE

N. Y. Philharmonic-Symphony, Dec. 22, E—George Szell opened this all-Russian program with an atmospheric reading of Moussorgsky's Prelude to "Khovantchina." Mr. Szell interpreted Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 4, which followed, with great tension and dramatic liveliness, without ever indulging in the purely rhapsodic. His interpretation is based on a clear idea of the work's structural design. He draws its outlines like those of a classical symphony, and the composition gains new meaning under this treatment. The orchestra played with virtuosity.

Erica Morini was soloist in the Tchaikovsky Concerto for violin and orchestra. Miss Morini also has an interpretative concept which treats this romantic work as if it were a classic concerto. Her beautifully warm tone, deeply searching musicianship, and, before all, her convincing interpretation made this reading of the concerto an extraordinary pleasure. H. W. L.

[Morini] *She did not diverge from the path of good taste . . . and she played with utter conviction. . . . George Szell . . . led the orchestra in well considered support of the soloist.* H. T., N. Y. TIMES

[Morini] *. . . her playing on this occasion was memorable for technical finish and expressive understanding. . . . The musicians under Mr. Szell gave Miss Morini well proportioned and expressively sympathetic cooperation. . . .*
F. D. P., N. Y. HERALD TRIBUNE

Philadelphia Orchestra, Dec. 27, E—Sibelius' 90th birthday was the keynote of the program, of which the first half was devoted to "En Saga" and the Symphony No. 7. For this reporter, "En Saga" was the discovery of the evening. Almost 60 years old, the score has the freshness, aural appeal, and emotional force of the best works written in our time. The shimmer and the oscillating color of the orchestration was beautifully projected by this virtuoso ensemble. In the Seventh Symphony, Mr. Ormandy demonstrated skillfully how the unity of this one-movement work can be realized. Every countrapuntal line spoke, and the structural design had convincing clarity and an impressive architectonic sense.

Soloist was Isaac Stern in Beethoven's Violin Concerto. He played the work with immaculate technique and searching musicianship. The audience, among whom were Nathan Milstein and David Oistrakh, gave him an ovation for his forceful and convincing performance, in which orchestra and conductor rightly shared for their understanding assistance. H. W. L.

[Seventh Symphony] *The work came to life as it does not often do in performance. . . . Isaac Stern . . . gave a fine account of himself in the Beethoven Violin Concerto.*
J. B., N. Y. TIMES

Mr. Stern played cleanly, with a wealth of feeling and tonal colors to spare. His rendition capped an event whose standards from start to finish did credit to the profession.
J. S. H., N. Y. HERALD TRIBUNE

N. Y. Philharmonic-Symphony, Dec. 29, E—The opening Overture to Mozart's "Don Giovanni," which Mr. Mitropoulos played with Busoni's concert-ending, led to the eagerly expected first performance in America (and, we believe, outside of Russia, where the work was premiered last October) of Shostakovitch's Concerto for violin and orchestra in A Minor (Op. 99). Soloist was the fabulous David Oistrakh, to whom the work is dedicated and who for two years has its exclu-

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sive performance rights. Deviating from the usual three-movement design, this concerto has four parts, the last two joined by a cadenza which leads into the spirited finale, called Burlesca. Another programatic title adorns the opening movement, which is called "Nocturno." As the word indicates, it is a piece of sombre, dark, and pensive music, with the solo instrument initially juxtaposed by low wind instruments (bassoon). When the musical idea is further developed a celesta-harp combination is used "piano" against a sustained tone of the solo instrument. The movement ends with the violin playing in its high register. The following Scherzo movement, a rhythmically lively piece, contrasts the violin with a woodwind background. The following Passacaglia is based on an ostinato figure played by celli and basses. The violin sings its song above this ostinato and, toward the end of the movement, winds up with a cadenza based on the ostinato theme. This leads into the last movement, Burlesca, constructed in rondo fashion, which gives the violin plenty of virtuoso material, closing with a brilliant run from the soloist's lowest to highest registers. The work was received with greatest enthusiasm.

Vaughan Williams Symphony No. 4, in the inimitable interpretation of Dimitri Mitropoulos, closed the memorable evening. H. W. L.

The concerto . . . was a bleak, gloomy, rather lonely work, thorny in technical difficulties and intense in personal feeling, but thin in musical invention. . . . [Oistrakh] *He played it so personally, that despite its pyrotechnics it did not sound like a display piece. And his dexterity, clarity of articulation, accuracy of intonation and purity of sound were all phenomenal.* R. P., N. Y. TIMES

Shostakovich's new concerto is not a significant contribution to the literature . . . it is too obviously tailor-made for Mr. Oistrakh's dazzling bow and fingers . . . there is a plethora of commonplace detail with only a few glimpses of a wider view. P. H. L., N. Y. HERALD TRIBUNE

N. Y. Philharmonic - Symphony; David Oistrakh, violinist; Dec. 21, E—A heavy program which included the Mozart Concerto in A Major, the Concerto in D Major of Brahms, and the Tchaikovsky Concerto in D Major was presented by the Philharmonic on the above date in Carnegie Hall. David Oistrakh, distinguished violinist, was the soloist. Dimitri Mitropoulos conducted with a firm and at the same time sympathetic hand.

Mr. Oistrakh gave ample proof of the fact that he is a most serious artist, equipped with an impeccable technique to which he adheres steadfastly. The broad second movement of the Mozart Concerto, demanding smoothness and tonal sweetness, was played by the soloist with satisfying interpretative suavity, although the subtlety of the first movement music at times appeared to elude the artist.

Mr. Oistrakh gave an exhibition of magnificent violin playing throughout the complicated Brahms Concerto. On the other hand, the portions reflecting the numerous purely romantic moods of the score did not seem to reveal complete imaginative susceptibility. Superb technical skill and effective interpretative achievement crowned this outstanding artist's rendition of the closing Tchaikovsky Concerto. L. C.

He is a master fiddler by any standards, technical or interpretive. H. T., N. Y. TIMES

All in all, this was a performance remarkable for its earnest intentions and magnificent technical fluency, but I must admit that I would rather put up with a little less technique and more searching interpretation. . . . Mr. Mitropoulos officiated with his customary zeal, but the orchestra sounded a bit pale in the Mozart and a bit lush in the Brahms. P. H. L., N. Y. HERALD TRIBUNE

N. Y. Philharmonic-Symphony, Dec. 31, E—With Andre Kostelanetz conducting, the first of four special Saturday night programs presented a festive New Year's Eve Gala concert. Familiar numbers heard were Bizet's mellifluous "L'Arlesienne" Suite and the Offenbach-Rosenthal "Gaité Parisienne," played with spontaneity and a blended orchestral tone that made the air glitter with sound. On the more popular side were the "Showboat" Scenario with its honeyed tunes of Jerome Kerns and the novel, more brittle "Saturday Night" by Hershy Kay. High points were the colorful, exotic Japanese pieces — the "Sea of Spring," by Michio Miyagi, with its mood pictures and delicacy of harmonic progression, and the Japanese Court Music, strange in tonal values but fascinating in imaginative effects. Mr. Kostelanetz has shown in other concerts that his conductorial ability is equally musicianly in involved compositions of the more serious category. His versatile wit in the lighter vein is one of the rare gifts of this very gifted conductor. M. C.

The works were happily chosen for a festive evening. E. D., N. Y. TIMES

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The orchestral playing was revealing and sympathetic . . . and high spirited in the ballet items which emphasized the holiday mood of the evening. F. D. P., N. Y. HERALD TRIBUNE

TOWN HALL

Little Orchestra, Dec. 19, E—The enterprising Mr. Scherman in this program introduced one of the most charming compositions of Morton Gould to his Town Hall audience: the Tap Concerto. With the immensely musical and sensitive Danny Daniels as soloist, the piece again made its great effect upon the public, which enjoyed its rhythmic spiciness and melodic charm. A first performance in New York of the Cantata de Navidad (Christmas Cantata) by Juan Orrego-Salas revealed a work typically Spanish in its rhythms and vocal lines, sung with great musicality and warmth by Mary Henderson, soprano. It has great atmospheric attractiveness, is not overly original, but in common with the Christmas classic, *Amahl* by Menotti, it has an immediate emotional appeal. The concert opened with a clean and well-balanced performance of Mozart's Divertimento No. 17 in D Major (K. 334), and also listed d'Indy's Concerto for piano, flute, cello, and string orchestra (Op. 89), with Eileen Flissler, piano, Murray Panitz, flute, and Isadore Gusikoff, cello, as the capable soloists. On the whole, the work is an example of craftsmanlike writing. With this interesting and well-produced program, Mr. Scherman closed the first half of his Little Orchestra season most successfully. H. W. L.

[Cantata de Navidad] *Mr. Scherman conducted his Little Orchestra Society in a performance that captured both the freshness and archaic spirit of the music.* H. T., N. Y. TIMES

Orrego-Salas' "Cantata de Navidad" . . . is imbued with a certain wide-eyed naivete. . . . Iberian intensities, however, are not alien to it and the Cantata, in a sense, blends these two seemingly disparate elements with more than ordinary success. But the work, in all, is uneven.
J. S. H., N. Y. HERALD TRIBUNE

Beverly Somach, violinist, Dec. 20, E—Beverly Somach, prodigy violinist of a few years ago, gave what amounted to her debut recital as a matured artist. She met the test with flying colors. Miss Somach, assisted at the piano by Artur Balsam, opened her recital with Mozart's Sonata No. 10 in B-flat, which she played with stylistic command, fine lyricism, and impeccable technique. She then delved into Brahms' Sonata in D Minor; she projected the emotional content and romantic spirit of this work convincingly. Her fine-spun tone and excellent bowing arm were noticeable assets in her persuasive rendition of the piece. Ravel's "Tzigane" followed. For Miss Somach the great difficulties of the piece did not seem to pose any problems. The supreme test of musicianship came with Bach's Sonata in C Major (for violin alone). She mastered its technical and musical difficulties expertly. Two virtuoso pieces, Bazzini's "La Ronde des Lutins" and Caprice No. 4 by Paganini, closed the official program brilliantly. H. W. L.

Miss Somach approached the Bach unaccompanied Sonata in C with the same thoughtful, individualistic conception that characterized all her playing last night. J. B., N. Y. TIMES

. . . a convincing exposition of grand tonal resources linked with a well-nigh foolproof technique.
L. T., N. Y. HERALD TRIBUNE

Bach Aria Group, Dec. 21, E.—Conducted by Frank Brieff, the orchestra and chorus of the Bach Aria Group appeared with their usual distinguished vocal and instrumental soloists: Eileen Farrell, soprano; Carol Smith, Alto; Jan Peerce, tenor; Norman Farrow, bass-baritone; Julius Baker, flute; Robert Bloom, oboe; Maurice Wilk, violin; Bernard Greenhouse, cello; Menahem Pressler, piano; and, as special participants, The Vienna Choir Boys, who joined the chorus and soloists in an elevating performance of the Magnificat. The rest of the program consisted of arias and duets in which the close acquaintance of all soloists with the stylistic requirements of their assignments was evident. It was a moving Yuletide concert. H. W. L.

. . . Eileen Farrell . . . was in extremely fine voice and sang the long, taxing phrases with apparent ease and great expressiveness. Carol Smith's rich-textured contralto voice also made a fine impression.
J. B., N. Y. TIMES

. . . the unity of execution developed by the performers over the years is surely the most remarkable feature of the ensemble's total rendition. They work together, think together, breathe together.
J. S. H., N. Y. HERALD TRIBUNE

Alice Baran, pianist, Dec. 22, E—Essentially a very fine musician, Alice Baran approached the many styles of her New York debut recital with intelligence and sensitivity. By virtue of its great weight and power, her most impressive presentation was the Beethoven Sonata No. 21 in C Major (Op. 53), but the Mozart Sonata in C Major (K. 330) was, for its smaller demands, even more pleasing in its perfect relaxation and happy charm.

Equally at home with the modern idiom, Miss Baran continued with Bartok's Roumanian Dance and Roy Harris' Piano Suite, which contrasted well with each other and were well handled. Her only excursion into romantic music was to play a Chopin "Impromptu" and the B Minor Scherzo, with which she appeared to be less in sympathy.

It seemed that the only time Miss Baran played less than extremely well occurred when she suddenly became conscious of what a good job she was doing and became tense. J. L. B.

. . . Alice Baran showed herself a pianist of strong feeling and intelligence. E. D., N. Y. TIMES

. . . a remarkably accurate technique. Her playing . . . was always clean, always sure. This listener, however, did feel that there was entirely too much tension in her work. . . .
R. B., N. Y. HERALD TRIBUNE

Vienna Choir Boys, Dec. 27, E—The Vienna Choir Boys offered an All Mozart program, including a group of five sacred compositions and some miscellaneous secular songs. The one-act operetta "Bastien and Bastienne,"

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aided by attractive costuming, was a feature. Composed of only 22 singers, the chorus lacks substantial volume and dynamic contrasts. Young solo voices were given prominence on the program at the expense of a generous share of ensemble work. The rendition of the first group of sacred numbers, especially the "Ave Verum," was characterized by a smooth, finely blended choral tone, with emphasis on quiet, well-phrased and carefully balanced expressiveness. The duet "Sub Tuum Praesidium" and the solo "Laudate Dominum" were also sung with telling effect. The Choir was conducted by its musical director Helmuth Froschauer, who also played the piano accompaniments. L. C.

["Bastien und Bastienne"] *They proved as unsuited to this sort of solo work as they were magnificent in the rest of the program.*
E. D., N. Y. TIMES

The sonority of the ensemble was homogeneous in tone, and precise, if never really beautiful. But one seldom heard it, for the program amounted to little more than an exploitation of a few solo voices.
A. H., N. Y. HERALD TRIBUNE

Rosemary Clarke, pianist, Dec. 29, E—Although Miss Clarke looks too youthful to hold a doctorate from the Eastman School of Music, the musical intelligence she demonstrated throughout her New York debut recital was proof enough of her achievement. Opening with Mozart's C Minor Fantasie (K. 396), Miss Clarke caught and held the attention of her audience with a performance that was impressive for its handling of clearly contrasted sonorities. The conception was vividly dramatic and it is to the pianist's credit that she was able to accomplish her ends without exceeding the bounds of Mozartean propriety.

The place of honor on Miss Clarke's program went to Grieg's Ballade in the form of Variations on a Norwegian Theme, rather than to the sonata more conventionally programmed by debut recitalists. As played by her, the piece proved to be a worthy substitution. In meeting its interpretative demands, the pianist demonstrated ample keyboard facility as well as an intellectual grasp and control of cogent musical ideas. These qualities were also present in Liszt's Tarantella from "Venice and Naples," Bloch's "Poems of the Sea," and the Toccata from Ravel's "Le Tombeau de Couperin," which brought the recital to a close. In all of these, Miss Clarke produced logical, musical sound-patterns, but failed to infuse them with the special fragrance which would have made her recital a unique experience rather than the very respectable achievement it was. S. R.

She played with considerable technical competence. But she seemed timorous about the music.
E. D., N. Y. TIMES

Rosemary Clarke . . . displayed a comprehensive technical skill, with command of dynamic shading, and her playing was generally marked by clearness of detail and musicality of tone.
F. D. P., N. Y. HERALD TRIBUNE

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Music Education League Announces Auditions

On Feb. 4 the Music Education League will begin its annual series of auditions for soloists and ensembles which, without interruption, excepting for the Easter holidays, will continue until after the middle of May.

Preliminaries for the 21st annual Catholic School Music Festival will open the third week in April, sessions to be held in each of the five boroughs of Greater New York. The festival finals will be held in Town Hall during the third week in May.

The final registration date for all instrumentalists was Jan. 10th; for singers the final registration date is Feb. 1; for Catholic School orchestras, choruses, and bands it is Feb. 15.

For all information concerning the coming concert and the auditions, address The Music Education League, 119 W. 57 St., New York 19.

"Music in Our Time"

Beginning Feb. 5 at 5:30 p.m., and for eight successive Sunday afternoons running through Mar. 25, the YM and YWHA will present a new series of forum concerts of contemporary music entitled "Music in Our Time." In order to reach a new and large audience for contemporary music, ticket prices are being kept extremely low ($5 for the series of eight concerts), and the programs are planned to cover a broad field of musical expression, not excluding contemporary jazz and music composed for tape recorder.

WOMEN AT WORK

(Continued from page 7)

mental work required is stupendous, and the "accessory" work in theory and conducting and in the seminars adds vistas to the arithmetic scoring. Music Education, pedagogy, instrumental work, vocal work of all kinds, ensemble or solo, with languages, psychology, and sociology would seem to make it an easy matter for the School's Concert and Placement Bureau to function. In fact, I have heard that the young instrumental graduates are in demand for major orchestra posts around the U. S. A. Leafing through the new catalogue one sees an attractive shot of the orchestra in rehearsal with Perlea; a scene from a Mozart opera; engaging little towheads with violins; and three "notables" of the year—Robert Notkoff, violin soloist with the Hartford Symphony; Vilma Georgiou, new Met soprano; Vera Franceschi, starring with the New York Philharmonic. There is no picture of Janet Schenck. Whenever I have asked the Administrative Assistant (the alert and capable Martin Sokoloff) to supply one for our readers, I receive only student-artist-teacher candids!

I hope I am not writing "out of turn" when I say that Mrs. Schenck typifies in her own personality something of the essence of the School. She makes one feel that there is strength and endurance in her slight physique; that there is will-power and wisdom behind her clear eyes. She typifies the elegance of the School and its graciousness. But there is more—there is a knowledge that comes only by way of experience. As a young girl, she studied here and in Paris, one of her teachers being the celebrated Harold Bauer. In New York City she did her Junior League work by teaching in a Settlement School. This has given rise to an inaccurate idea that the Manhattan School of Music developed out of a Settlement School. This is not the case. The Manhattan School of Music, a separate organization established by Mrs. Schenck and her trustees in 1917, was incorporated in 1920 under the Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York, and in 1925 received its permanent charter. It has one unique facet which interests me almost as much as its achievements in music. The names of the guests and the Board members reads like a Social Register; yet the School maintains its high standards of work, and its doors are open democratically to the young aspirant who belongs to the aristocracy of talent. Admission requirements are rigid but fair; personality and character must rate as high as musical ability.

THE NATIONAL SCENE

Ralph Varde

CLIFFORD TORREN, *newly elected president of N.A.T.S.*

11th N.A.T.S. Convention A Huge Success

■ The 11th annual convention of the National Association of Teachers of Singing held in Chicago's Sheraton Hotel Dec. 27-31, was "the most successful one, and the best attended to date," said outgoing President Bernard U. Taylor in his address to the 350 delegates from all sections of the U.S. Right, indeed, was the genial Taylor, for the over-all program (Harvey Ringel, chairman) excellently planned, with distinguished pedagogues and artists participating, was stimulating throughout the four-day convention. Comprehensive group discussions, lecture-recitals, opera, and other performances, were enthusiastically attended not only by the numerous members of NATS, but by more than two hundred daily visitors as well.

Outstanding among convention events was the singing of Schumann's "Dichterliebe" by Aksel Schiotz, justly regarded as a foremost interpreter of the German Lied. The noted baritone (formerly a tenor) lived up to our expectations in a well-projected account of Schumann's wondrous cycle, in which he was admirably seconded at the piano by William Browning, who shared with the distinguished singer the acclaim from the audience which packed the spacious Ball Room.

Other lecture-recitals to be mentioned for their interest and excellent performance, were those presented by Frederick Schauwecker, well-known coach accompanist, whose lecture on "Later German and French Songs" was illustrated with groups by Schumann, Brahms, Debussy, Faure, Wolf, and Strauss, beautifully sung and interpreted by Harold Brindell, tenor; Lucile Hertel, alto; John Toms, tenor; and Elaine Hubbard, alto; and Celius Dougherty, composer-pianist, who spoke on "Contemporary Contributions to Song Literature." With the composer at the piano, a cross-section of his songs in three classified groups were sung to full advantage by Maria Montana, soprano, Helene Hekman Gezan, and our own John MacDonald, bass-baritone, who were equally gifted vocally and interpretatively.

To Chicago Musical College of Roosevelt University, NATS is indebted for a presentation of Puccini's one-act opera *Gianni Schicchi* by its Opera Workshop, given on the opening night, with a well-trained and talented cast under the conductorship of Erwin Jospe, Director of the school's Opera Workshop.

Another interesting feature of the convention program was Joseph A. Lippmann's volatile, constructive talk (as well as an entertaining one) on "The Relationship of Student, Teacher, and Management."

The Finalists of the NATS Singer of the Year Contest (the most exciting highlight of the entire convention), presided over by the popular and highly esteemed National Contest Chairman B. Fred Wise, were heard following the festive Annual Banquet. Six gifted and well-trained young singers, adjudged in preliminary contests to be ready for a concert career, were each heard in a 20-minute program of representative song literature. Winner of the Finals was Richard Rivers, baritone of Huntington College, Montgomery, Alabama. The decision of the judges—Henry Weber, Director of Music, WGN, Chicago; Joseph A. Lippman, Executive, National Concert and Artists Corporation, New York, and Roger Dettmer, Music Critic, *Chicago American*—was unanimous. Mr. Rivers, in addition to receiving a cash award of $500 (to be raised to $1,000 next year), and paid recital engagements sponsored by each district of NATS, will be given auditions by the Lyric Theatre of Chicago, the San Francisco Opera Company, and the Metropolitan Opera Association.

The NATS 11th convention was epoch making from the standpoint of acceptance of the new By-Laws, which provide a representative from each of the eight districts of the U.S., as members of the Board of Directors.

Among other achievements worthy of particular note, was the program planning which made the discussion group a vehicle providing opportunity for every individual to participate actively in the convention; the resolution to present a full program of songs by a contemporary American composer at each convention; and to make the presentation of the NATS Singer of the Year (instituted for the first time this year) an annual affair.

Newly elected officers of NATS are Clifford Torren, President; Alexander Grant, Dale Gilliland, Theodore Stelzer and B. Fred Wise, Vice-Presidents; Hadly R. Crawford, Secretary; William Eberl, Treasurer; Gertrude Twigley, Registrar.

It was voted to hold the 1956 convention of NATS in Buffalo, N. Y., during the week following Christmas.

■ The National Opera Association formed in 1954 to stimulate efforts for American opera talent and to advance composition and produce opera, held its first convention in conjunction with the National Association of Teachers of Singing in Chicago. The elected officers are: Leonard Treash, Eastman School of Music, President; Daniel Harris, Oberlin College, 1st Vice-President; Hubert Kockritz, Cincinnati Conservatory-College of Music, 2nd Vice-President; Fred L. McKitrick, Flint Michigan Civic Opera, Treasurer; and Gladys Mathew, Community Opera, Inc., New York, Secretary.

Dr. Elemer Nagy, noted stage director of Hartford, Conn., Ft. Worth, Mobile and Central City discussed the training of the singing actor. Another session was devoted to a field trip to observe stage materials and lighting practices at the Goodman Theater.

Prominent among the delegates were Willard Rhodes, Columbia University; Henry Hobert, Phillips University; Josef Blatt, University of Michigan; Ludwig Zirner, University of Illinois; Clifford Baer, Wake Forest, N. C.; William V. Boland, Midwestern University, Wichita Falls, Texas; Don L. Earl, Brigham Young University; Howard Groth, Arkansas State Teachers College and Constance Eberhart, Inspiration Point Opera Workshop, Eureka Springs, Arkansas.

DOSHA DOWDY and RENÉ DEVRIES

CHICAGO

■ Fritz Reiner and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra contributed handsomely to the spirit of the holiday season, with more concerts than usual played to full houses. There was a memorable Beethoven Fifth, Hindemith's stirring Suite "Noblissima Visione," the most stylish presentation of "The Nutcracker Suite" we have ever heard, Two Symphonic Interludes from Block's "Macbeth," an exciting performance of Kodaly's Suite from *Hary Janos*, with Toni Koves imported to play the Cimbalom in both this work and the Liszt Hungarian Rhapsody in D Major, which nearly "brought the house down" at the close of the New Year's Eve concert.

The soloist for the three subscription concerts of the final week of the year was Camilla Wicks, who played beautifully polished and musical, if not inspired, performances of the Mozart Concerto for Violin, No. 5, in A Major (K. 219).

■ When Mischa Elman is in top form, he has no rival, and this he was when the audience which packed Orchestra Hall heard his recital on the eve of the holiday season. His program was begun happily with the Bach-Nachez Partita in E Minor, in which his violin produced the never-failing large and golden tone we are accustomed to hear from this great artist, who resorts to no tricks to win favor, but always gives the music its just due.

As a Mozart exponent, Elman probably has no peer. He "sang" the Sonata in B Flat Major wonderfully, with fervor, grace, and, above all, with the greatest simplicity. The Elman virtuosity found full display in a performance of the Vieuxtemps Concerto No. 5 (A Minor), so rich in tonal value and so deft in its authoritative execution that we consider it one of the most notable achievements of Elman's long and brilliant career.

The artist's eloquent performance of Chausson's Poème gave the work new and unforgettable beauty. An early Romance in A Major by Alexander Tcherepnin opened the final group, which also held Gianneo's Zapateado and the Paganini-Elman Caprice No. 24, tossed off with dazzling brilliance. Joseph Seiger was Elman's extremely sensitive and musicianly accompanist.

■ The All-Chopin program given by Halina Czerny-Stefanska, making her debut here in an Orchestra Hall recital, will long be remembered for the sheer beauty of performance of the composer's smaller forms. Extremely musical, and with an exquisite singing tone, Miss Stefanska played with charming ease, yet with an address strongly personal, devoted, and authoritative. Surprisingly absent from her program was one of the Chopin sonatas, for in the bolder Polonaises, and even in her performance of the Andante Spianato and Grand Polonaise, the artist did not convince us that she was capable of handling music of a bravura and dramatic quality. Still, Chopin's music is not primarily the robusto type, and we wonder if Miss Czerny-Stefanska may not be one of Chopin's "chosen" interpreters.

■ The Pavanne Opera Theatre (Dino Bigalli, Conductor and Artistic Director), will open its three-week season at the Eighth Street Theatre on Jan. 20, with a full-scale production of Puccini's *Madame Butterfly*. Subsequent presentations will be *Rigoletto*, Jan. 22; *Pagliacci*, Jan. 27 (to be coupled with a one-act ballet to be announced); *La Bohème*, Jan. 29; and *The Barber of Seville*, Feb. 3.

The Pavanne Opera Theatre, organized last season as a non-profit corporation, is a Chicago company, founded to provide operatic opportunities exclusively for Chicago's young singers, and to encourage the growth of opera in Chicago by presenting full-scale performances at popular prices.

Garbo

LOUIS KOHNOP and AIDA RUBINSTEIN *will appear in duo-piano recitals for the Niles Township Center Congregation Forum Series in Skokie, Ill., Jan. 25, and for the Beth El Congregation in Madison, Wis., Jan. 29. Mr. Kohnop has also appeared during the season as soloist with the Chicago Symphony under Henry Mazer in Saint-Saens' "Carnival of the Animals," and as recital accompanist for Szymon Goldberg and Alyne Dumas Lee.*

■ The Collegiate Sinfonietta of Chicago (Dieter Kober, conductor) presented for the second of this season's series of six chamber concerts given in Fullerton Hall, a Christmas program of particular interest. Ray Still, principal oboist of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Julia Rahaman, soprano, and Robert Bloch, concertmaster of the Sinfonietta, were soloists in a varied program of baroque compositions, including Handel's Concerto for Oboe and Strings No. 1 in B-flat Major; the concerto for Violin and Orchestra No. 1 in A Minor by J. S. Bach; and three seldom-heard arias by the German composers Tunder and Weckman and the American John Herbst. Also programmed were the incidental music from Purcell's *The Fairy Queen*, a first performance of a chamber Sonata by Antonio Caldara, and the Christmas Oratorio by Manfredini.

DOSHA DOWDY and RENÉ DEVRIES

CINCINNATI

■ Ventsis Yankoff, young Bulgarian pianist, made his United States debut with the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, Thor Johnson, conductor, at the ninth pair of subscription concerts on Dec. 9-10. He thus became the seventh outstanding European artist in six consecutive years, and the second in the current season to make his first American appearance under the aegis of the Cincinnati orchestra. The other American debut this season was that of Joerg Demus.

In the Beethoven Piano Concerto, No. 4, in G-Major, Yankoff gave us some of the most impressive piano playing heard in Cincinnati this year. Scales of limpid purity, a tensile

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strength gentle in its affirmation, and a rare sense of rubato are hallmarks of his technique. His tone is always full and warm; it never rises to a clamor or a shout. Linked to a poetic temperament, it voiced perfectly the serenity of Beethoven's second movement, and romped gaily through the delightful rondo. Thor Johnson, for his part, displayed his well known flair for understanding collaboration in his handling of the orchestral background. And once again, the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra honored the 90th birthday of Sibelius. This time it was by means of a sonorous "Finlandia" and a tonally splendid presentation of his Fifth Symphony.

The largest audiences of the season packed Music Hall for Thor Johnson's annual Christmas gift to musical Cincinnati when he presented Handel's "Messiah" at the tenth symphony pair of programs, Dec. 16-17. In this he revealed one of his most prized assets in the appreciation of art—his successful purpose of making the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra an expression of the entire community's musical resources. The soloists, for example, were all active and prominent participants in the city's musical life. Eleanor Ryan, with a voice of luminous clarity, was the richly endowed soprano; Franklin Bens, whose agile tenor voice is ideally suited to oratorio, sang with a secure sense of style; Hubert Kockritz, another veteran of past "Messiahs," gave the bass lines with authority and vocal beauty; Charlotte Shockley, the contralto, had a tendency to drag behind the orchestra in her expressive part. A large chorus of young voices from the Highlands High School in Ft. Thomas and the University of Kentucky, Northern Center, sang with gusto, precision and a freshness of quality that many maturer groups might well envy. For general, all-round excellence, this was one of the finest "Messiahs" in many years, a performance of many aural pleasures and deep emotional impact, in which the orchestral accompaniment was above criticism.

Little attention is sometimes paid to the Cincinnati Orchestra's efforts to bring symphonic music to the community's outlying districts by means of its low-priced Neighborhood Family Concerts. Nevertheless, they are increasing in interest and in the response they arouse among the non-symphony-going public. The concert on Dec. 11 attracted an overflow, enthusiastic audience to the Colerain Township School. Among the soloists presented were 14-year-old Robert Martin, who astonished listeners with the maturity and beauty of his tone on the violoncello, and four young singers (Shirley Grace, soprano, Edward Roach, tenor, Felix Long, baritone, and George Kirch, bass-baritone) who sang operatic ensembles with the aplomb of professionals.

■ The LaSalle String Quartet, whose presence in Cincinnati has triggered so remarkable an upsurge in the understanding of chamber music, gave its second concert of the season in the College-Conservatory of Music auditorium on Dec. 13. Although even the super-sophisticates in the audience shook their heads over the program's contemporary cornerstone, the Schoenberg Quartet No. 3 (Op. 30), the gifted group played it with evident relish and, one might almost say, with a romantic touch. The catholicity of style which has become synonymous with the growing reputation of the LaSalle Quartet was apparent in the A Major (Op. 55, No. 1) of Haydn and the Mozart E-Flat Major (K. 428), which flanked the Schoenberg work. They were played with admirable purity and finesse.

LOUIS JOHN JOHNEN

CLEVELAND

■ Continuing the parade of guest conductors during the New York tenure of George Szell was Fernando Previtale who provided a highly pleasurable evening. His program, not too erudite, was nevertheless designed to combine novelty with lighter fare. The novelty was Busoni's Suite from his opera *Turandot*. Four of the eight movements were played at this time and we found the music highly descriptive of the various imaginative scenes. Busoni freely uses Oriental themes and carries them out in his own individual and dramatic style. Unduly neglected in the concert hall, Busoni's works should be heard more often. Other numbers on this program were Rossini's "Siege of Corinth" in a first performance here, Mendelssohn's "Scottish" Symphony Cesar Franck's "Eros and Psyche," and Verdi's *Sicilian Vespers* Overture. The Italian conductor, a thoroughly grounded, amiable musician whom the orchestra followed *con amore* and the audience thoroughly enjoyed, led the orchestra with fire and enthusiasm.

Eduard van Beinum, who presided over the eleventh pair of concerts, provided exciting and dramatic fare for his first appearance in this city. His program consisted of well-known and well-beloved music. Opening with the *Freischütz* Overture, which at once proved his great powers of interpretation, van Beinum introduced the Etudes Symphoniques of his countryman Hendrik Andriessen. It is an engaging work, supposedly in the 12-tone vein, but not à la Schoenberg, whose variously recurring short phrases were well integrated and provided a welcome novelty. Ravel's Rhapsodie Espagnole in its subdued colors and the highly dramatic Symphonie Fantastique of Berlioz were the two *pièces de resistance* that won ovational response from an excited audience.

■ The much-heralded great violinist David Oistrakh came to Music Hall under Bernardi's banner, but where are the words to describe adequately this amazing demonstration of violinistic genius? His program included Beethoven's Op. 12, No. 1, Prokofieff's "Devil's Trill" Sonata, Ysaye's Sonata Ballade for solo violin, and shorter works by Khatchaturian, Tchaikovsky, and Debussy. His marvelous collaborator at the piano was Vladimir Yampolsky, an exceptional artist in his own right.

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■ The announcement that Rudolph Ringwall, for the past 30 years associated with the musical destinies of the Cleveland Orchestra in various capacities, is planning to retire from the scene to devote himself to his expanding radio duties created a stir in the city. From his violin desk he was promoted to assistant and, for the past 15 years, associate conductor. He inaugurated the famous Children's concerts, the Pop, and Twilight Concerts, which are creating future as well as present audiences for our orchestra. his conductorial successor will be Robert Shaw (of the famed Chorale) and Louis Lane, young former apprentice conductor to George Szell. Mr. Lane has been in charge of the Summer Pop concerts for the past two seasons and has also conducted the Canton Symphony Orchestra for several years.

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PHILADELPHIA

■ The Gilels-Oistrakh invasion which has brought Moscow much closer to Philadelphia, artistically speaking, ended on a climactic note as David Oistrakh performed three concertos and an encore with Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra. This was a special concert to benefit the Orchestra Fund (reduce the deficit), and though it was the Monday before Christmas, with best seats $7.50 and $10, the house was nearly filled. Everyone present agreed it was a memorable concert. Oistrakh played three demanding works—the Mozart Fifth, the Bach in E, and the Tchaikovsky—each played with consummate artistry, not as display pieces. Each work came newly alive. So did the Saint-Saens Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso.

Another ranking violinist also scored with the Orchestra, as Isaac Stern made his first appearance with them in five years, playing the Beethoven Concerto with insight and tonal beauty. A novelty on the program was a Concerto Grosso for Strings by the Swiss composer D'Alessandro, in its American premiere. Written in the 20th century, with an over-the-shoulder look to the 18th, it made a pleasant if not profound impression. Bizet's Symphony in C, which the Orchestra played for the first time in November, made such a hit that Ormandy programmed it again—the first time in years that a major work has been repeated so soon in the subscription series.

An all-orchestral program (except for the women's voices of the Philadelphia Orchestra Chorus in Debussy's "Sirènes") featured French music. Copland's "Billy the Kid" Suite did not fare well, divorced from the ballet.

Ormandy's annual Viennese program at New Year's featured items by the Strausses and Schubert's "Great" Symphony in C in a spacious, well-paced reading.

■ The Metropolitan Opera scored with its handsome production of *The Tales of Hoffmann*, with Pierre Monteux in command. Leading roles were well taken by Martial Singher, Richard Tucker, Roberta Peters, Risë Stevens, and Lucine Amara.

■ The Philadelphia Grand Opera Company, following its unfortunate *Faust*, came back strong with a well-rounded production of *Madame Butterfly*. Licia Albanese triumphed in the title role, both vocally and dramatically. Walter Fredericks was an able Pinkerton. Giuseppe Bamboschek conducted.

■ Is the day of the vocal recitalist waning in Philadelphia? Erna Sack didn't half fill the Academy of Music several weeks ago. And the acclaimed Renata Tebaldi only half filled it the Tuesday after Christmas. She revealed superb vocal control and beautiful mezza-voce as well as her wonted power, in a virtually all-Italian program of songs and several arias. Both Sack and Tebaldi were presented as single attractions by independent concert managers. Apparently it has to be a series event to draw a capacity house.

■ A stirring performance of Bach's Christmas Oratorio by the Bach Choir of Bethlehem was led by Ifor Jones at the Academy of Music. It was the high point of the National Mid-Winter Conclave of the American Guild of Organists. There were numerous recitals, lectures, and other events in mid-city churches and elsewhere. Among the recitalists was Rudolph Kremer, who played Bach's complete "Art of the Fugue."

■ The Philadelphia Civic Ballet scored in two performances of Tchaikovsky's "Nutcracker." . . . Another Yuletide event was the Mendelssohn Club's annual performance of Handel's "Messiah," with Harold W. Gilbert conducting. SAMUEL L. SINGER

BALTIMORE

■ The Baltimore Symphony Orchestra again finds itself faced with a crisis. Not only has Massimo Freccia resigned his post as conductor and musical director, but the orchestra association now finds itself in the market for a new manager as well. Robert E. MacIntyre, for reasons not quite clear, has resigned his post as manager. The orchestra, too, has come to grips with the perennial problem of symphony orchestras, that of finding money to sustain itself. However, this season the Baltimore Symphony is in need of the grandiose sum of $119,000. The deadline date for the raising of the money is Jan. 7. As of this writing, the orchestra is far from its goal. If aid is not forthcoming from the state or the local citizenry, Baltimore will join Milwaukee in ts "honored" position of being the only major U. S. city not having its own orchestra and therefore forced to resort to lend-lease musical culture. We hope and trust that the orchestra will find some way to overcome what appears to be its worst problem to date.

■ The Baltimore Civic Opera Company's presentation of *Aida* on Nov. 4 was distinguished only by a very nicely sung title role by Mija Novich of the New York City Center Opera. Barbara Ann Nuttall, the Amneris, had a bad cold, and the rumor going around is that her last scene was mimed only; the offstage voice: Civic Opera's artistic director, Rosa Ponselle!

■ Nov. 8 found the National Symphony Orchestra opening its season here with an extremely odd program, a combination of Brahms, Gershwin, Wagner, Richard Strauss, and more Gershwin. Oscar Levant, who seems to be making a habit of not appearing when scheduled—didn't. Earl Wild played Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue" and "Concerto in F" with ample feeling for the idiom but an overnice at-

tention to pianistic details. The orchestra sounds much richer in tone this year, and Dr. Mitchell has shown improvement in his podium deportment, though little as an interpreter or in the actual handling of orchestral details.

■ For their second concert, on Nov. 9, Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra played Bach's Fantasia and Fugue in G Minor in a transcription by William R. Smith, Roy Harris's Symphony No. 7, and Brahms' Piano Concerto No. 2, with Geza Anda as soloist. The evening seemed hardly worth the effort expended until after intermission when Mr. Anda, a brilliant young pianist, provided a first-rate performance of the Brahms Concerto. The orchestra sounded as rich and velvety as ever.

■ On Nov. 22, Reginald Stewart led The Little Orchestra in the third Candlelight Concert with Agi Jambor, pianist, William Kroll, violinist (both of the Peabody Conservatory), David Mankovitz, violist, and Luigi Silva, cellist, as soloists in an all-Mozart concert. The latter three performed the Divertimento in E flat for Violin, Viola, and Cello (K. 563) very beautifully, but with a slight predominance in the violin. The orchestra, under Dr. Stewart, performed the Symphony No. 30 in C Major in a tasteful but undistinguished manner. However, Agi Jambor's exquisite rendition of the Piano Concerto in E-flat (K. 482) was not only a fine performance of this work, but some of the best Mozart playing this reviewer has heard.

■ The all-Mozart program by the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Massimo Freccia with Ania Dorfmann, piano soloist, on the very next night provided a striking contrast. Playing the Concerto in E-flat Major (K. 271), Miss Dorfmann, in contrast to Miss Jambor's rounded piano tone and warm playing, sounded dry and brittle. A brighter, more varied pallette would have greatly abbetted her otherwise stylistically and technically able performance. Freccia's conception of the Symphony No. 35 was beautifully worked out, an interpretation with dash and verve, if occasionally leaning toward overstatement. The "Jupiter" symphony seemed beyond his interpretative powers, but was nicely played.

After opening the Nov. 16 concert with a bright reading of Berlioz's "Roman Carnival" Overture and an uneven presentation of Schubert's "Unfinished" Symphony, Massimo Freccia and the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra afforded balanced support to Pietro Scarpini in Prokofieff's Concerto No. 2 in G Minor for Piano and Orchestra. This unpleasant sounding but technically interesting concerto came off very well, with Mr. Scarpini's small hands accomplishing their tasks with relative ease. The program ended with excellent accounts of Respighi's "Fountains of Rome" and three excerpts from "Die Meistersinger."

■ The Philharmonia Orchestra of London proved themselves a truly great organization under the excellent direction of Herber Von Karajan on Nov. 14. Sensitive performances of Vaughan-Williams' Fantasia on a Theme by Tallis and Brahms' Variations on a Theme by Haydn were given. The only disappointing work was Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 4. The tone was rather lightweight and the interpretation somewhat demure for this strongly Russian music.

BERNARD LERNER

WASHINGTON, D. C.

■ As of this writing no announcement has been made by the National, Philadelphia, or Boston Symphonies concerning the consolidation of their three Washington subscription series beginning with the 1956-57 season. It was front page news when word of the negotiations leaked out more than a month ago. Under the proposed plan, the Philadelphia and Boston Orchestras would discontinue their Washington subscription series. Instead, these orchestras would be presented, but less frequently, by the National Symphony as part of its regular subscription series.

The cries of protest have subsided from dyed-in-the-wool Philadelphia and Boston fans, some of whom were indignant over any reduction in the number of concerts to be presented by their favorite group. The feeling now prevails that the single-package series is a sensible step, one that not only will be of financial benefit to the orchestras concerned, but will also provide a richer musical diet for Washington concertgoers. If this bold and unorthodox move accomplishes its purpose, it may well set the pattern to be followed in other cities where severe orchestral competition has resulted in anemic box offices.

■ On Jan. 3 the Philadelphia Orchestra was heard in its third appearance of the current season and the concert proved to be in every respect a memorable one. Eugene Ormandy shared the podium with the Finnish conductor, Jussi Jalas. Isaac Stern was guest soloist. The program opened with the novelty of the evening, a Concerto Grosso for Strings by the contemporary Swiss composer Raffaele d'Alessandro. The piece, which is classic in form and feeling, but contemporary in harmonic structure, is fresh, fast moving, and thoroughly listenable. It was well received. There followed the Sixth Symphony of Sibelius, conducted by the composer's son-in-law, Jussi Jalas. The Orchestra gave a vibrant performance of the work, sparked by the conductor's authentic interpretation of the composer's intentions.

The Sixth Symphony lacks some of the emotional impact of Sibelius' more popular symphonic works. Probably for this reason it is not more widely known and performed. Yet the excellence of craftsmanship and the vivid tonal colors which are Sibelius' hallmark are present no less in the Sixth than in his better known works.

Highlight of the evening was the Beethoven Violin Concerto, played as though it were truly a labor of love by Isaac Stern. This was a performance to remember. One had the feeling that everything the composer put into the score, and perhaps a little more, was brought to the audience through Stern's impeccable musicianship. Surely with so great a violinist in our midst, America's artistic assets do not suffer for want of an Oistrakh.

■ On Jan. 4 the National Symphony, playing to a capacity audience, was heard under the direction of Paul Callaway in a modified concert version of Mozart's *Don Giovanni*. Soloists for the evening were Kenneth Smith (Don Giovanni), David Lloyd (Don Ottavio), Mac Morgan (Leporello), Edwin Steffe (the Commandant and Masetto), Lois Marshall (Donna Anna), Phyllis Curtin (Donna Elvira), and Barbara Gibson (Zerlina).

Mr. Callaway is the well-known and well-beloved director of music at Washington's National Cathedral. He has earned an international reputation in his field of choral conducting. Last year his extremely successful concert presentation of *Cosi fan tutte* assured Washington audiences of another opportunity to hear Mozart opera in concert form. *Don Giovanni* was a happy choice. Even for Mozart, whose very name is synonymous with melody and originality, this score is exceptional.

The great length of the work—it was presented virtually intact in the Prague version—imposed something of a strain on artists and audience alike. Nevertheless the evening must be accounted a huge success, with top honors going to Mr. Callaway for his feat in putting together and directing the production, to the National Symphony for its brilliant and precise playing throughout the performance, and to Lois Marshall, whose powerful and amazingly flexible voice, not hitherto heard in Washington, stopped the show on several occasions.

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certo for Jazzband and Symphony Orchestra, was presented as the fourth composer in the Louisville series of opera commissions made possible through their grant from the Rockefeller Foundation. The opera, *School for Wives*, based on Moliere's *L'Ecole des Femmes*, was world premiered on Dec. 3 in Louisville, and was conducted by Moritz Bomhard, director of the Kentucky Opera Association.

Kenneth Allen Associates Adds Artists and Attractions

Kenneth Allen Associates will introduce several new artists and attractions to America during the 1956-57 season, Sergio Perticaroli's first American tour has already been announced. This brilliant young Roman pianist will make his debut with the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, and his first season will not extend beyond November. Also making their American premiere tours in the fall are I Solisti di Zagreb, a chamber music group of 17, with the well known Antonio Janigro, conductor and 'cello soloist, and a baritone soloist; and, from France, Lycette Darsonval, dazzling premiere danseuse of the Paris Opera with her "Paris Ballet" for a three-month tour starting in October.

In addition, Brian Sullivan, whose radio and TV engagements have for the past few years been taken care of by Kenneth Allen Associates, now joins them for concert management as well; the Fine Arts String Quartet will be available throughout the season and will also perform special concerts with Reginald Kell, clarinetist; The American Piano Trio (touring with their own pianos); and De la Fuente and Stessin, violin and piano duo, are also new to the Allen list.

Kenneth Allen Associates will also book The Shakespearewrights in their first American tour after three years of solid success in New York City as a Shakespearean repertory company, and, in addition, the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo, in association with David Libidins.

Other artists represented by Kenneth Allen Associates are: Jeanette MacDonald; Lauritz Melchior; Oscar Levant; Smeterlin; Appleton & Field; Stecher & Horowitz; Sylvia Marlowe; Ricardo Odnoposoff; Virgil Thomson as conductor and also as lecturer; conductors Gustave Haenschen and Carmen Dragon; the Roger Wagner Chorale (making their first transcontinental tour this season); Serge Jaroff's Original Don Cossack Chorus and Dancers; the Columbus Boychoir; the Rondoliers; Pearl Primus Dance Company; and, for radio and television only, Jerome Hines.

The famed Roger Wagner Chorale, headed by its French-born director, Roger Wagner, is celebrating its 10th anniversary year by touring the U.S. from coast-to-coast for the first time. This busy singing group made its first public appearance in Los Angeles City Hall in 1945 as the City of Los Angeles Concert Chorale, a unit spon-

sored by the City of Los Angeles Bureau of Music. It will make its New York concert bow on Sunday evening, Mar. 18, in Carnegie Hall.

Barrett Mgt. Announces Major Additions to Artist List

Twelve world-famous artists, five special attractions, and fifteen major conductors, will make up the Herbert Barrett Management list for season 1956-57.

Wilhelm Backhaus, Guiomar Novaes, Benno Moiseiwitsch, Moura Lympany, and Stell Anderson are the pianists represented by the company. Bidu Sayao, Inge Borkh, Eva Likova, Martial Singher, and Nicola Rossi-Lemini are the singers. Joseph Fuchs, violinist, and Ralph Kirkpatrick, harpsichordist, are other renowned artists who continue their representation under this management.

Special attractions will be the Bach Aria Group (William H. Scheide, Director) in programs devoted to the music of Johann Sebastian Bach; the American Opera Society, which will present a series in New York and also a production of *Dido and Aeneas* with distinguished soloists, chorus, and orchestra on tour; a joint recital of Inge Borkh with Alexander Welitsch, baritone; the New Music String Quartet; the New York Woodwind Quintet; a joint recital of Jacques de Menasce, composer-pianist, with Lillian Fuchs, violist; and the Stradivarius Society (Gerald Warburg, Director).

Conductors will include Josef Krips, Igor Markevitch, Georg Solti, Victor De Sabata, Desire Defauw, Fritz Stiedry, Nicolai Malko, Maurice Abravanel, Julius Rudel, Lukas Foss, Jonathan Sternberg, Oliviero De Fabritiis, Ernesto Barbini, Emil Cooper, and Martin Rich.

Albuquerque Announces "Hans Lange Day"

The Albuquerque Civic Symphony has set aside Jan. 31 as "Hans Lange Day." On this date the renowned conductor starts his 30th year of conducting. The Orchestra has already received tributes, felicitations, and expressions of friendship from orchestras, conductors, and artists with whom Dr. Lange has been associated—including the Berlin Philharmonic, members of the N. Y. Philharmonic (where he was Associate Conductor for eight years), members of the Chicago Symphony (where he was first Associate Conductor and then Conductor), from Dame Myra Hess, Piatigorsky, Francescatti, Arrau, Bartlett and Robertson, Heifetz, Ormandy, Leonard Rose, Mack Harrell, Julian Olevsky, and many others.

National Grass Roots Opera Auditions

Auditions for the National Grass Roots Opera Company will be held in New Orleans, La., the week of April 19, 1956, it was announced by A. J. Fletcher, President, National Grass Roots Opera Foundation, Inc. Applications should be directed to Mrs. Edward B. Ludwig, Chairman of Auditions, 570 Woodvine, Metairie Ridge, La., with a copy to David Witherspoon, Manager, P. O. Box 1406, Raleigh, N. C. Audition winners will receive five months training in opera, singing in North Carolina 50 to 75 performances (exclusive of interstate tours) of five to eight different roles. All performances are sung in English.

Festival of Music on NBC "Producers' Showcase"

"Festival of Music," an event unprecedented in the musical field and unique in television history, will present 10 of the world's top opera and concert artists in a 90-minute spectacular colorcast on "Producers' Showcase," Monday, Jan. 30 (NBC-TV, 8-9:30 p.m., EST).

Marian Anderson, Jussi Bjoerling, Zinka Milanov, Jan Peerce, Roberta Peters, Gregor Piatigorsky, Artur Rubinstein, Isaac Stern, Renata Tebaldi, and Leonard Warren will be seen and heard in a "live" program of great music from the concert and opera field.

Charles Laughton, actor-director latterly renowned for his dramatic readings on TV, will be starred as master of ceremonies. Herbert Graf of the Metropolitan Opera, will serve as stage director.

"Festival of Music" will be produced under the personal aegis of S. Hurok, famed impresario, recently represented on "Producers' Showcase" by the Sadler's Wells Ballet.

Some of the artists, including Artur Rubinstein, pianist; Renata Tebaldi, dramatic soprano, and Gregor Piatigorsky, cellist, will be making their "live" television debuts. All of the singers are members of the Metropolitan Opera.

Kirk Browning will be TV director of "Festival of Music." Supervisors of the production will be Donald Davis and Dorothy Mathews. Burr Smidt will design the settings, and Noel Taylor the costumes.

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THE INTERNATIONAL SCENE

Leo Rosenthal

One of the young members of the Obernkirchen Children's Choir curtsies upon being greeted by MRS. ELEANOR ROOSEVELT *at the U.N. on Dec. 13, where the choir sang, under their conductor Edith Moeller, in the U.N. General Assembly Hall for an audience of delegates and staff members.*

VIENNA

■ Jazz is a subject heatedly discussed nowadays in musical circles of Vienna. A number of guest performances by American jazz ensembles were climaxed at Christmastide by the renowned Louis Armstrong and his group. Though no longer as vital as he once was, "The King of Jazz still carries his audience by virtue of an irresistible personality.

But the biggest to-do about jazz is being stirred up by the world-famous Beethoven piano interpreter Friedrich Gulda, who can be heard every evening (when not on tour) at Vienna's only jazz spot. With his own recently formed jazz combo, including the best Austrian musicians, a young American trumpeter, and his own very personal piano style, he has appeared in a series of 10 radio broadcasts. In three public discussions he challenged the deadly Viennese enemies of jazz, and apparently convinced them by inspired arguments and the unique quality of his jazz performances. This passionate championship of jazz by a musician equally persuasive in classical music is more remarkable when you realize that the same Gulda has just organized his own classic orchestra, made up of members of the Vienna Symphoniker, which specializes in rarely played pre-classical and classical works in their original versions.

■ The 60th birthday of Paul Hindemith was celebrated in Vienna by several guest-conducting appearances. After a radio concert, which listed his E-flat Major Symphony, the representative event at the Konzerthaus offered the oratorio "Das Unaufhoerliche." Written in the early 'thirties, the work is one of the best from this composer's pen and contains moments of inspiring beauty, anticipating already the "harmony of the spheres" of the new Kepler opera. Another, and less important, work was produced at the Volksoper—*Neues vom Tage*. This is the same opera that so outraged Hitler that he stigmatized Hindemith's music as "decadent." This production was delightful, however. In fact, at the Volksoper you can have a better time nowadays than at the Staatsoper, where apparently the gray ghost of routine moved in again after the four festive weeks.

■ Mozart is now the musical topic of Vienna. Karl Boehm conducted his first Mozart program with the Philharmonic. The representative Austrian Mozart movie, just premiered, was as bad as everyone expected—saccharine, unimportant, trashy—in short, "Viennese." Fortunately, Mozart's spirit pervaded one matinee performance which featured Albin Skoda, Vienna's most popular actor, reading from Mozart's letters, and Walter Klien at the piano.

■ There were many fine orchestra concerts in recent weeks. Erich Kleiber, absent from Vienna for many years, had announced that he would demonstrate the "real" Verdi (by which he meant to take a slap at the State Opera, which had not invited him to conduct one of the opening performances—a regrettable omission, to be sure). Although the performance of the Requiem was a personal triumph for Kleiber, he proved his point inconclusively, for the soloists (Rovere, Madeira, Lambert, Neri), with the exception of Madeira, were not in best voice, as a result of Vienna's inclement weather.

DR. ERICH JANTSCH

BERLIN

■ A new production of Alban Berg's *Wozzeck* is always an event of importance. A production of the same work behind the Iron Curtain is nothing short of a sensation. The East Berlin Deutsche Staatsoper undertook this formidable venture on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the world premiere of *Wozzeck* at the same house (or perhaps one should better say the same site, as the house has since then been bombed and rebuilt twice). As the general line is still heavily opposed to any sort of Western "formalism" and "decadence" —indeed versus anything which is not adaptable to the needs of socialistic realism—nobody is to expect from this one performance a break with the policy followed until now.

Be that as it may, there cannot be any doubt about the artistic quality of the production. Stage and pit are completely integrated, and it is difficult to imagine a scenically more satisfying realization of the work than the present one, which is directed by Werner Kelch and designed by Hainer Hill. Concentration is its sign; nothing diverting the attention from the human (not merely social) tragedy of the doomed hero is permitted, not even the traditional intermission between the second and third acts.

Johannes Schüller from Hannover is the conductor. With deep insight into the formal patterns of the score, he plans and develops number after number with a constant sense of the greater whole. Once again the Staatskapelle proves that it is the foremost German opera orchestra. Certainly no longer strangers to music of this kind, the manner and confidence with which these people have overcome the enormous difficulties of the score deserve unrestrained admiration. Personally I would have preferred voices of heavier weight, but this is to touch the crucial point of the Staatsoper situation: its dearth of top-rank voices. Perhaps, one might argue, that with certain works—and *Wozzeck* surely belongs in this category—the culture of ensemble singing is definitely of greater importance than the beauty or power of this or that single voice. In that case the Staatsoper performance is a miracle of modern teamwork, and it is only just to name the main singers in succession as the program gives them: Wozzeck was sung by Kurt Rehm, the Tambourmajor by Günther Treptow, Andres by Helmut Meinokat, the Hauptmann by Gerhard Stolze, the Doctor by Heinrich Pflanzl, and Marie by Sigrid Ekkehard. Let us hope that *Wozzeck* will stay in the repertoire of the Staatsoper for many seasons to come!

HORST KOEGLER

LONDON

■ Otto Klemperer was guest conductor at the last of the B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra's Festival Hall concerts this year. He has long been recognized here as an interpreter of the German classical repertoire of the highest repu-

tation. At this concert, however, to the surprise of many, he included Debussy's Three Nocturnes—"Nuages," "Fêtes," and "Sirenes"—all of which were played with a variety of tone color, charm, and delicacy somewhat rare in a German when interpreting music of the French School. In "Sirenes," the B.B.C. Women's Chorus eloquently portrayed the sensuous beauty of (to quote Debussy's words) "the mysterious song of the Sirens as they laugh and pass on." Preceding the Debussy, Klemperer conducted a beautiful performance of Mozart's "Prague" Symphony, using a reduced orchestra. The final item was Brahms' Fourth, which, to this listener, sounded tired and, therefore, lacked conviction.

■ Wolf-Ferrari's opera *Sly* was quite unknown in England until the B.B.C. gave a recent studio performance. It was an appropriate choice, as the setting is in the London of Shakespeare's day. The subtitle is "The Story of the Sleeper Awakened," and the drama opens on a damp and misty evening in the Falcon Inn. Christopher Sly, a tavern brawler but a gifted poet, is the center of what was intended as a comedy plot by the Earl of Westmoreland and his friends, and is abducted, while in a drunken sleep, to the Earl's palace, where he is dressed in rich clothes and laid on a bed. In the last act his drunken dreams turn to a strangely moving tragic climax. Wolf-Ferrari's mother was Italian (he was born in Venice) and his father German. His music, though melodious, is free from the lushness so typical of Italian operas. Moreover, he has a strong sense of characterization, and the two main characters, Sly and Dolly, are drawn with masterly distinction. The Italian libretto by Forzano was translated, and the opera produced, by Dennis Arundell, and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra was conducted with compelling power and vitality by Rudolf Kempe. The title role was sung with notable intensity of expression by the excellent American tenor Howard Vandenburg, who is a member of the Munich Opera. This work should be transferred to the stage as soon as an opportunity arises; until now Londoners have heard only three of Wolf-Ferrari's operas — *Susanna's Secret*, *The Jewels of the Madonna* (both at Covent Garden in the prewar International Season) and *I Quattro Rusteghi* (now in the repertoire of the Sadler's Wells Opera Company under the title of *The School for Fathers*). Each of these in their contrasted styles created a favorable impression.

■ Before leaving here for his engagement at the Met, Kempe took charge of a concert by the London Mozart Players, a small orchestra whose fine qualities in music of this school have previously been referred to in this column. He is, incidentally, the first guest conductor to appear at any of their series. There were two symphonies—Haydn's No. 55 (more familiarly known as "The School Master") and Beethoven's First. Clara Haskil, a Mozart player of exceptional gifts, was the soloist in this composer's Piano Concerto in B-flat (K. 595). Although, deservedly, he has now made a brilliant reputation as an operatic conductor, Kempe has so far made few appearances here on the concert platform. It is evident that he is also a symphonic conductor of equal versatility.

■ Alfred Wallenstein is conducting a series with the B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra, during which he will introduce some unfamiliar and neglected works. The first was Charles Loeffler's vivid tone poem "The Death of Tintagiles" for orchestra and viola d'amore. Although written 50 years ago, it is little known in England. The tone poem is based on a play by Maeterlinck, is said to be one of Loeffler's best-known works, and is dedicated to Ysaye. It was impressively played. Special mention must be made of solo viola d'amorist Harry Danks, leader of the viola section of the orchestra.

■ At Covent Garden two important changes in the cast of *Tannhäuser* made a second visit of considerable interest. The Elizabeth was Una Hale, an Australian member of the resident company who sang the second act with a bright, ringing tone and led the concerted music with assurance. She requires, however, more legato and variety of tone color to do justice to the Prayer. The Venus was Marianne Schech, leading dramatic soprano of the Munich Opera, who sang the role with great emotional power and opulence.

■ There is a distinct possibility that London may have a new concert hall. The idea of rebuilding the old Queen's Hall has wisely been discarded; the new project is a proposal by the London County Council to build a small hall adjacent to the Festival Hall. This would be designed to seat about 1,100 and is precisely what is required. The Albert Hall holds about 6,000, the Festival Hall about 3,500, and Wigmore Hall about 500. There is a real need for a hall to hold about 1,000; it would be a boon for chamber music, recitals, etc. If the scheme goes through, the building would presumably take a year or two to complete and, in this writer's view, would be welcomed by all branches of the musical profession as an economical project. It would have the advantage, too, of being easily accessible from all parts of London, with ample parking facilities. ARTHUR NOTCUTT

ROME

■ The Teatro dell'Opera in Rome opened its season this year on the day after Christmas. While La Scala and the San Carlo chose to inaugurate their seasons with operas from the standard Italian repertory (*Norma* and *Aida*, respectively), the Rome Opera chose to begin the year with Handel's *Giulio Cesare*, a work which—at least in recent years—has been performed only once before (at the Roman theatre in Pompeii). This selection is typical of the theater's program for the new year. In recent seasons, the Rome Opera has been severely criticized (by the undersigned, among others) for its poor programs and its lack of enterprise; this year, however, their list of scheduled operas is the most interesting of Italy's major houses. Besides two interesting Verdi revivals, *Macbeth* and *Vespri Siciliani*, they are also doing *I Puritani* and Tchaikovsky's *Pique-Dame*. A French company, directed by Cluytens, is coming to perform *Pelleas;* German companies are going to do *The Magic Flute* and *Die Meistersinger*.

The inaugural *Giulio Cesare* was an admirable effort in many respects. Gianandrea Gavazzeni, though he is not well known outside of Italy, is one of the country's best conductors; he is a scholar, but not pedantic; he leads the orchestra firmly without rushing it or showing off. Under his direction, the Rome Opera's orchestra sounded crisp and warm, and the performance never lagged or bolted. The work was given in an anonymous "edition," in which the lovely air "Lascia ch'io pianga" became a chorus to close the first act, and in which the part of Caesar, originally interpreted by the *castrato* Senesino, was assigned to a bass.

The bass in question was Boris Christoff, a singer with considerable style and musicality, though perhaps not the ideal interpreter for 18th-century operas. In the *recitativo secco*,

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he tended to be of uncertain pitch and, at least for me, his voice always sounds too "Russian" for the elegantly turned phrases of Handel or Gluck (he starred in the Rome production of *Iphegenia in Aulide* last year). Still, he was dramatic in the big numbers, and in the wonderful *recitativo accompagnato*, "Alma del gran Pompeo," he was very moving.

Fedora Barbieri was a Cornelia of heroic stature. Though she was given some of the libretto's worst lines to sing ("nel tuo seno, amico sasso"), she was of an impressive dignity and sadness; her rich mezzo was never better. The young tenor Franco Corelli (who had been Radames in Naples's *Aida* last month) played the part of her son Sesto Pompeo—another ungrateful role, which this gifted artist's stage presence and noble voice made into something fine and exciting. The villain of the piece was played by basso Mario Petri, another excellent singing actor.

Cleopatra's is the most moving role in the opera, musically speaking, and it was assigned to the soprano Onelia Fineschi, who had "retired" prematurely a few years ago. Miss Fineschi, on this return, received very good notices, but one felt that the critics were being a little sentimental. Though she sang correctly, always on pitch, she never was really warm or at ease; one sensed that she was being too careful. Her voice seemed rather hard and pinched. She is scheduled to sing Mimi later in the year; one hopes that, on that occasion, in an easier and more familiar role, she will show some of the richness that her voice had in the past.

La Scala's Margherita Wallmann came down to stage the production. An ex-dancer and choreographer, Miss Wallmann on some occasions tends to excessively "plastic" staging; but in *Giulio Cesare*, she arranged a production that was stylized without being stiff or static. At times, the opera seemed an 18th-century masque—which surely is not too far from the work's real nature. The sets and costumes of Piero Zuffi were also properly pompous: a baroque composition of rich velvets, gold, and silks.

■ Among the most interesting and most successful concerts recently was that of the Juilliard Quartet, which is now making its first European Grand Tour. The Rome performance was a great success both with public and critics, despite the fact that the ensemble had not scheduled an "easy" program, and the Roman audience is notoriously intolerant of anything too modern or too taxing. After beginning with the Haydn C Major (Op. 74, No. 1), the Quartet performed—with crystalline clarity—the Webern Five Movements for String Quartet (Op. 5). After this came Berg's Quartet Opus 3, a splendid work splendidly performed. Finally, they played Beethoven's Opus 135 (not exactly a relaxation after two 12-tone works!), which left the public slightly groggy, but very enthusiastic.

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Berman Designs Sets and Costumes For New "Little Scala"

Noted scenic designer Eugene Berman has created the scenery and costumes for Mozart's *Cosi fan tutte*, which will be presented by the newly opened Little Scala in Milan on Jan. 27, beginning the festivities celebrating the 200th anniversary of the great composer. *Cosi fan tutte* originally was to be the inaugural opera for The Little Scala, but due to the illness of conductor Cantelli, *Il matrimonio segreto* was substituted. Mr. Cantelli will conduct *Cosi* and it will be staged by Giorgio Strehler, director of the Piccolo Teatro della Citta di Milano. Mr. Berman's association with *Cosi* and The Little Scala marks the first time an American stage designer has been invited to create the decor of a major production for the foremost lyric stage of the world. Leading roles will be sung by Elisabeth Schwarzkopf and Schiutti. American singer Nan Merriman will also be heard. The Little Scala is the newly built Chamber Opera Theatre in the building of the big La Scala, with the special purpose of housing the more delicate and intimate musical works of the 17th and 18th centuries.

DECEASED

■ MANFRED BUKOFZER, chairman of the Music Department of the University of California, Dec. 8 in Oakland. He was one of the leading musicologists of the world, specializing in

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baroque and medieval music. He wrote widely in the fields of musical ethnology, esthetics, and sociology. Born in Oldenburg, Germany, Mr. Bukofzer was educated at the Universities of Berlin, Heidelberg, and Basle, beginning his teaching at Basle and continuing at Cambridge and Oxford before coming to the United States. He was naturalized as a citizen in 1945. He was a member of the Medieval Academy of America, the Composers' Forum, the International Society of Musicology, the American Society for Esthetics, and the Music Library Association.

■ EMMY LAND WOLFF, wife of Dr. Werner Wolff of the Chattanooga Opera Association, Nov. 19 at her Tennessee home. Coming to this country in 1939, Mrs. Wolff continued a notable operatic career by teaching and coaching. Her debut as a leading dramatic soprano was made in the early 1930s at the Vienna Volksoper. A year later she went to the Hamburg Opera, where she met and married Dr. Wolff, then conducting for that company. The State Opera in Berlin and the leading Italian houses heard the soprano in works of Verdi, Wagner, and Mozart. Her engagements carried her across the continent and under the baton of the most renowned conductors. Choral works of large scope were also in her repertory. As dramatic director of the Chattanooga group, she staged, this past October, a brilliant performance of *Madama Butterfly* with soprano Tomiko Kanazawa in the title role. She was a member of the music faculty of the University of Chattanooga.

■ ALEXANDRE TIKHONOVICH GRETCHANINOFF, composer and one of the last of the 19th-century romantic school of Russian writers, Jan. 4, aged 91. Born in Moscow in 1864, his life was one of sweeping changes, both political and musical. One of his famous teachers was Rimsky-Korsakoff at the then St. Petersburg Conservatory. He heard and played in presentations of the Tchaikovsky symphonies; in fact, a whole volume might be written to describe the personages and events of his long and colorful life in Russia, in Paris, and in the United States. He wrote more than 300 songs, many of which are still programmed and used for studio teaching; seven cantatas, three operas, five symphonies, suites, overtures, concerti, and chamber works, were part of his large output in composition. Mr. Gretchaninoff was awarded an artist's pension by the Czar just four years before the 1917 disaster. He hailed the provisional government of this earlier revolution with "A Hymn of Free Russia." Speedily disillusioned, he left Russia in 1925, coming to this country a few years later. One of his last public appearances was Oct. 26, 1954, when he saluted an audience in Town Hall on the occasion of a concert celebrating his 90th birthday and featuring an entire program of his works.

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SCHOOL NEWS

By GID W. WALDROP

NANCY SMITH *(left) as Orpheus, and* BETTY GREY EDWARDS *as Eurydice in a recent production of Gluck's* Orpheus *at the Univ. of Redlands School of Music.*

Eastman Composer Reports From Denmark

Dr. Wayne Barlow, composer and member of the administrative staff of the Eastman School of Music of the University of Rochester, is strongly with those who urge more American music for European listeners. Writing from Copenhagen, Denmark, where he is on a year's Fulbright lectureship at the University, Dr. Barlow reports that he has heard no American music except for a little chamber music by Aaron Copland which was played on the radio in the course of the composer's visit to Denmark.

Plenty of American jazz is to be had in the record shops, most of it with European labels, but serious American orchestra music is completely submerged by music of European composers. Dr. Barlow supports Dr. Howard Hanson, director of the Eastman School, in his criticism of the recent visit to Europe by the New York Philharmonic Orchestra. Dr. Hanson insists the orchestra, instead of playing music by Shostakovitch, Prokofieff, and other European moderns with whom Europe is thoroughly familiar, should have played more American music. The purpose of the tour, he points out, was to be a goodwill American cultural mission, with the presumed purpose of acquainting Europe with American art.

Dr. Barlow also suggests that our State Department explore the possibilities of a reciprocal agreement by which pressings of European contemporary music by American companies be made in return for the same number of pressings of American music by European companies.

Winter Colonists at the MacDowell Colony

Dr. Ernst Toch, one of the world's foremost contemporary composers, is among the current quota of winter residents at the MacDowell Colony, Peterborough, New Hampshire. He took up residence there after completing his Third Symphony scheduled for premiering by the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra. A native of Vienna, but an American citizen since 1940, Dr. Toch has been professor of composition at the University of Southern California from 1940 to the present. He has composed between 75 and 100 works primarily for orchestra or orchestra and a solo instrument, but including string quartets, and likewise three operas, *The Princess on the Pea, The Fan,* and *Egon und Emilie.*

Also in residence, this first season that the Colony has been open in winter, is Norman Vogel of Ithaca, New York, who was a Colonist during the summer of 1953, and has written much music that has been cordially received. Among his recent works have been two String Quartets; Spring Suite for piano; Circus Suite for two pianos, four hands; and a Violin and Piano Suite, as well as a Ballet for Orchestra.

Paul Nordoff of Spring Valley, New York, was the first composer to take advantage of the Colony's new winter facilities, and has completed two months of residence there. He has composed many songs and concerti as well as orchestral works which have been played by leading symphonies of the country, including the New York Philharmonic-Symphony, the Louisville, Minneapolis and St. Louis Symphonies. He was a summer resident of the Colony for four seasons, and composed his First Symphony, commissioned by the Louisville Symphony Orchestra, while living there.

COLLEGE OPERA PRODUCTIONS

■ The University of Texas Opera Workshop presented two amusing short operas, *The Jumping Frog of Calaveras County* by Lukas Foss and *Albert Herring* by Benjamin Britten, late in December. The Foss opera will be repeated for a children's concert in San Antonio, at the invitation of the San Antonio Symphony Orchestra. Alexander von Kreisler directs the Opera Workshop; John Cunningham is associate director and conductor.

■ The Opera Workshop of the Music Department of the Univ. of Redlands, California, recently presented the opera *Orpheus* by Gluck. The production was very well received by a large audience. The production was directed by Edrie Sellick, and Edward Tritt was the conductor. The University-Community Symphony played and the concert choir of the University sang the choruses. The Workshop has as its object to make opera an integral part of the musical life in that section of California.

16th-Century "Modern Music" Discussed

New evidence that modern music actually dates back to the 16th century was presented in Princeton, N. J., on Dec. 28 before the American Musicological Society by Prof. Claude Palisca of the University of Illinois School of Music. According to Prof. Palisca a musical treatise written in 1588 by Vincenzo Galilei contains a detailed analysis of a musical style anticipating that of Monteverdi, the early 17th-century composer who has been called "the creator of modern music." Galilei's manuscript in the National Library of Florence, Italy, had been assumed to consist of routine musical exercises and therefore was passed over by modern scholars.

Until recently historians have held that music lagged behind painting and architecture in developing a Baroque style. Palisca's find, however, supports the theory that this style emerged in music at approximately the same time as in other arts. The 16th-century author of the treatise, father of the famed astronomer Galileo, was renowned on his own account as a lute player, composer, and writer in musi-

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cal theory. As a Fulbright Scholar in Italy, Palisca spent the better part of two years in study of his music and writings.

Peabody Receives Accreditation

The Peabody Conservatory of Music in Baltimore has received notification of its accreditation by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, the second professional school of its kind in the East to be so honored.

The association's report contained high praise for the standards of the Maryland school, and in announcing the accreditation, Reginald Stewart, Peabody director, said: "This is cause for rejoicing. Especially since music is now an accepted part of the general educational program rather than an extra-curricular subject as it was for many years." Peabody offers the degree of bachelor and master of music and is affiliated with The Johns Hopkins University, Goucher and Loyola Colleges.

STUDIO NOTES

■ Prof. Max Klein reports recent successes of two soprano pupils. Catalina Zandueta, veteran of two New York Town Hall recitals, is now singing in leading German Opera houses the title roles of *Aida* and *Madama Butterfly*. Dina Soresi, who created the leading role of Emily Dickinson in the Mannes College production of Jan Meyerowitz' opera *Eastward in Eden* last season, is the winner of the 1955 Blanche Thebom $1000 award. She was chosen from among 30 finalists.

■ Three artist pianists who have worked under the direction of Edwin Hughes were heard in a Town Hall recital during the month of December: eminent Alton Jones, Rosemary Clarke (debut), and Anthony Chanaka. Orchestral appearances of Hughes' pupils this season include: Ronald Hodges, with the Mountain Lakes Orchestra; Dorothy Bullock, with the Babylon L. I. Symphony; and 13-year-old Lorraine Gaal, with the Butler, Pa., Orchestra. Miss Bullock will play in Carnegie Hall on Feb. 18 under the direction of Alfredo Antonini, and Mr. Hodges is scheduled for an April date with the Rochester Orchestra. Alberta Childs was heard Jan. 7 with the Wilkinsburg, Pa., Orchestra.

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CONTEST ANNOUNCEMENTS

■ The winner of the **Michaels Memorial Music Award** will receive a $1000 grant to further his music career plus a solo appearance with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra at the Ravinia Festival during the summer of 1957. Up to four candidates will be selected from the auditions to appear in the finals at a regular performance with the Grant Park Symphony Orchestra, Nicolai Malko conducting, June 30, 1956. Auditions in voice, string instruments, and piano will be held in Chicago during April. For the convenience of Eastern candidates, a preliminary hearing will be offered in New York City. Application forms, obtainable by sending name and address to the Award office, Michaels Memorial Music Award, 108 N. State St., Chicago 2, Ill., must be completed and returned with all enclosures prior to Feb. 17, 1956.

■ A four-year scholarship to Belhaven College will be awarded the winner of the auditions being held in conjunction with the **Music Festival of the South,** Jackson, Miss., Feb. 24 and 25, which will feature the New Orleans Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra.

Dr. McFerran Crowe, Belhaven president, advised Gen. L. Kemper Williams, President of the Symphony, that the high school student who wins the audition and the right to appear as soloist with the symphony at the Youth Concert in Jackson Feb. 24 will be given a $1500 scholarship. Second place winner will receive a $1000 scholarship.

■ After the big success of the **11th International Competition for Musical Performers in Geneva,** in which 263 candidates belonging to 22 countries participated, the Organizing Committee has decided to hold another International Competition in 1956. This is to take place Sept. 22 to Oct. 6 and will comprise the following categories: Voice, Piano, Violin, Oboe, Horn and, for the first time, Guitar.

Young artists, between 15 and 30 years of age, from all countries may compete. Prizes amounting to 13.500 Swiss francs are anticipated. Once again the Competition will be organized in collaboration with Radio Geneva and with the Swiss Romand Orchestra.

The prospecti containing the rules and program of the Competition are ready. They will be sent gratuitously by the Secretariat (Conservatoire of Music, Geneva, Switzerland) on request. The list of the jury, formed by eminent international and Swiss masters, will be published at the end of February, 1956. Applications will be accepted not later than July 14, 1956.

■ A competition for performance, open to the composers of unpublished music, has been announced by **Mu Sigma,** honorary music society of New York University's Washington Square College and Graduate School of Arts and Science, and sponsor of the project. The members of the Selection Committee who have accepted Mu Sigma's invitation to judge the entries are headed by Philip James, and include Leon Barzin, Leonard Bernstein, Martin Bernstein, Aaron Copland, Norman Dello Joio, Jay Harrison, Peggy Granville Hicks, Harrison Potter, and William Schuman. They will choose the winning compositions to be played in April, 1956, at a special Memorial Concert, honoring the late Marion Bauer. Educator, author, critic, and composer, Miss Bauer had devoted her life to helping young composers obtain performances of their unknown or neglected works. It is expected that this concert will be the first of an annual series, under the auspices of the society, to continue her work. Submissions should be mailed to, and further information may be obtained from, Philip James, Room 318 Main Building, New York University, N. Y. C. 3.

■ Plans for the 32nd annual **Naumburg Competition** have been announced by the Walter W. Naumburg Musical Foundation. Once again, the winning artists will be presented in a Town Hall debut sponsored by the Foundation during the 1956-1957 season. The competition is open to pianists, violinists, violists, cellists, and singers between the ages of 16 and 30 who have not already had a New York recital reviewed by the critics. A recital in New York under the age of 10, even though press notices were received, shall not exclude the candidate.

To be admitted to the competition, each candidate must present written recommendations by a music teacher or music school, as well as by two musicians of acknowledged standing, verifying his musical talent and capability of giving a recital in Town Hall. The Foundation reserves the right to reject the application of any candidate who is apparently not prepared for a New York recital.

Application blanks may be secured from the Walter W. Naumburg Musical Foundation, 130 W. 56 St., New York 19, N. Y. All applications must be filed before Feb. 1, 1956. Preliminary auditions will be conducted during the month of March, 1956. Final auditions will be held on April 2 and 3, 1956.

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By J. KENNETH WILSON

SECULAR CHORAL MUSIC

■ MARIO CASTELNUOVO-TEDESCO: "Three Shelley Songs" (Op. 173) for Women's Voices, Soprano I, Soprano II, and Alto. As is usually the case in choral music for treble voices alone, the accompaniment is an integral part. The composer's method of setting the English text is similar in all three of these compositions: he allows the metric quality of the poems to dictate to a great extent the rhythm; he seeks a tune which may be employed as a recurring and unifying theme in each piece. Hence, in accordance with the poetry, the resulting musical phrases are commonly regular, occasionally square, with unexpected and effective variations from time to time; in addition, the use of unifying musical materials creates a distinctive work in its own right. A further enhancement of the poetry is brought about by the use of choral devices—humming effects and sustained parts against moving parts. The three compositions are entitled "When the Lamp Is Shatter'd," "One Word is Too Often Profaned," and "The Fountains Mingle With the River," and are priced at 25c, 20c, and 20c, respectively. *G. Ricordi & Co., New York.*

■ AARON COPLAND: (1) "Stomp Your Foot" from *The Tender Land,* arranged for mixed voices with piano duet accompaniment, words by Horace Everett. The composer's lean harmonic style, sparkling use of the piano, and skillful manipulation of authentic elements creates a choral square dance which is not only real and alive but also a classic symbol. The earthy, worldly feeling of movement is sustained throughout. This charming chorus, which offers few technical difficulties, will be a joy to perform. 28c.

(2) "The Promise of Living," Quintet from *The Tender Land,* arranged for mixed chorus with piano duet accompaniment, words by Horace Everett. Being a "gently flowing" lyrical Thanksgiving song, this music offers direct contrast to the above mentioned. Actually variations on a theme with a diverging middle section, the music achieves an exalted climax near the end, and from there gradually diminishes to a *piano* ending. 28c.

(3) "Choral Finale from Canticle of Freedom," Text by John Barbour. This concluding section of the "Canticle of Freedom" for chorus and orchestra may be performed as a separate composition with piano accompaniment unless a symphony orchestra is available, in which case the composer authorizes performance only of the complete work. It was recently performed in New York by the Symphony of the Air and the Schola Cantorum. Vocal score with piano arrangement, 30c. *Boosey and Hawkes, Inc., New York.*

■ MARY HOWE: "A Devotion" for chorus of men's voices *a cappella,* Tenor I and II, and Bass I and II, words by John Donne. Latin and English are employed separately and simultaneously in this interesting combination of archaic and modern devices. The text, which comes in for a lot of repeating, is subordinate to the music, but is admirably sustained by the mood which the music sets. A successful compositional experiment which uses the men's chorus with great sensitivity and should be welcome in the better repertoire. 25c.

■ MABEL DANIELS: "A Psalm of Praise" For Chorus of Mixed Voices (S.A.T.B.), Three Trumpets, Percussion, and Organ or Piano. The vocal score contains the full instrumentation with the trumpets written in concert pitch. A climactic, festival type of concert piece, the trumpets and percussion provide lively, imaginative rhythms, and the chorus itself is virtuosic and extremely active. An appropriately prayerful section is employed just before the final statement and climax. The orchestral parts for three trumpets, snare drum, triangle, tambourine, cymbals, and timpany are available on purchase, at $4.50 per set. The vocal score is 50c. *H. W. Gray & Co., Inc., New York.*

MUSIC FOR BAND

■ "Kentucky—1800" and "Waltz in Blue" by CLARE GRUNDMAN. The first of these two separate publications contains statements and variations of the folk songs "The Promised Land," "I'm Sad and Lonely," and "Cindy." The form is typically sectional and the instrumentation is full and sonorous. "Waltz in Blue" is a brilliant conception, with striking modulations, and a lot of sustained work and flowing melodies. Parts may be added to the "Full Band" instrumentation to make the "Symphonic Band." There is very little solo work, and, as usual, there is much doubling of parts both for sonority and safety. Included are both Full and Condensed scores. Price: Full Band, $5, Symphonic Band, $7.50. *Boosey and Hawkes, Inc., New York.*

■ Song of the Bells" by LEROY ANDERSON. The versatile composer of "The Blue Tango" adds this work to his large repertoire of band compositions. Using instrumental effects to great advantage, he produces a lively waltz of attractive interest. Full Band, $6, Symphonic Band, $8. Full score and condensed score available. *Mills Music, Inc., New York.*

■ "Skyscraper Fantasy" by DONALD PHILLIPS arranged for band by Philip J. Lang. After a grandiose beginning, the music goes through a "Beguine," a fast dance, a slow lyrical section, and closes as it began. Full Band, $5.50, Symphonic Band, $8. *Mills Music, Inc., New York.*

■ "Minuet" by J. OLIVADOTI. A charming, simple adaptation of the minuet form of about two and a half minutes' duration. Although the instrumentation is uncomplicated, the effect is still good. Full Band $3.50, Symphonic Band $5.50. *Mills Music, Inc., New York.*

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BOOK REVIEWS

By HAROLD C. SCHONBERG

■ With the Mozart bicentennial officially beginning this month, one can be sure that a good number of Mozart studies will be published before the year is out. One of the first to arrive is *Mozart in Retrospect* by A. Hyatt King (Oxford University Press, 279 pp., $7). This book is a group of unrelated essays on the composer that have previously appeared, for the most part, in various scholarly magazines. As King is a redoubtable Mozart authority, we are fortunate to have this collection between hard covers. Whether the average reader will benefit too much is another question. Some of the material—for instance, a census of Mozart autographs in Great Britain, or a lengthy examination of a clavier duet (K. 19d)—will be of interest only to experts. On the other hand, there is an excellent essay on the subject from which the book takes its name, there are some exceedingly penetrating remarks on the nature and problems of Mozart biography, and the section on Mozart and the clavier should be read by anybody who has any interest in Mozart's piano music. All of King's research is documented in an approved scholarly manner. The book is highly recommended; may subsequent Mozart studies this year have equal authority!

■ Harold Rosenthal's *Opera Annual* (John Calder, London, 176 pp.) also takes cognizance of the Mozart bicentenary. This is the second volume in Rosenthal's series to appear; the first was issued last year. Since Mozart is stressed, a good deal of general information previously included has been dropped. There is no review of the American scene, and the operatic survey of European countries has been curtailed. The Mozart section numbers among its contributors Edward J. Dent (with a fine essay named "The Modern Cult of Mozart"), Vittorio Gui, David Franklin, John Pritchard, Karl Boehm, Hermann Friess, and a group of singers of the past and present who have specialized in Mozart. Also present is a sketchy discography of Mozart operas. Unfortunately, most of these ladies and gentlemen have surpassingly little of interest to contribute, and some of them are distressingly concerned with tooting their own horns. The most valuable section of the annual is that devoted to the opera houses of the world, with personnel and repertoire.

■ Add two more opera books: *How Opera Grew*, by Ethel Peyser and Marion Bauer (G. P. Putnam's Sons, 495 pp., $6) and Heinrich Kralik's *The Vienna Opera House* (Verlag Brueder Rosenbaum, Vienna, 200 pp.). The former, a running history, is written in the popular style of the authors' *Music Through the Ages* and *How Music Grew*. It is fairly simplified, comprehensive, has some fascinating odds and ends of information, and should be of great value to the beginner in opera. A few mistakes and misspellings are not fatal. Kralik's book is fine as long as it devotes itself to a history of the great opera house in Vienna. For the first 92 pages of his book he carries the story from the beginning through the war years, and ends just before the curtain was ready to rise on the reconstructed opera house. Here the reader will find much gossip and information not readily available elsewhere. But the rest of the book consists of sentimental program notes about a group of operas—*Fidelio*, *Don Giovanni*, *Aida*, and others; and even Beethoven's Ninth slides in—that really are a waste of paper. The illustrations are worth having, however.

■ Not exactly an opera book is Gladys Davidson's *A Treasury of Opera Biography* (Citadel Press, 352 pp., $4), a collection of alphabetically arranged, ineptly written thumbnail biographies of many singers. A good number of these singers are, like the author, English, and are completely unknown here, either in person or on records. Davidson obviously is an enthusiast of singing. She certainly is no writer. For a sample of her style, here is her summation of Victoria de los Angeles: "She seems to be a songbird that never tires of carolling sweet trills and lovely notes."

■ The first full-scale biography of Aaron Copland appears in Julia Smith's *Aaron Copland—His Work and Contribution to American Music* (E. P. Dutton and Co., 336 pp., $5). About two years ago a study by Arthur Berger was published, but that really was little more than an extended essay. The present book is a cut-down version of a doctoral dissertation. It is painstaking, accurate—and dull. Copland has moved through a fascinating panorama that covers Europe and the Americas, but little of that excitement and the boiling surge of the Twenties is communicated in this stodgy compilation of names, dates, and works. Naturally the book will have a place on the shelves, inasmuch as it presents the pertinent facts about a leading American composer. Nobody will read it with pleasure, however.

■ *Miscellany*: Robert Stevenson's *Music Before the Classic Era* (St. Martin's Press, 181 pp., $4) is a well-organized, simplified, and readable account of music up to the time of Bach and Handel. Highly recommended. Stevenson covers the main trends in his little book, offers a bibliography at the end of each chapter, and manages to present an integrated picture of the mainstream of music. . . . A useful, low-priced book for the collector is Warren De Motte's *The Long Playing Record Guide* (Dell Books, 448 pp., 50 cents). It covers nearly every important disc up to the time of publication, alphabetically by composer, and discusses comparative versions of a given piece of music. The criticisms are short and to the point, and the approved selections are consistently sensible. . . . *An Elizabethan Song Book*, with music edited by Noah Greenberg, text by W. H. Auden and Chester Kallman (Doubleday Anchor Books, 243 pp., $1.25) is a rarity among paperbacks. It contains well-printed vocal music of Elizabethan composers. Most comparable collections are either hard to get or very expensive. The music here is lovely, and the introduction by Auden and Kullman is stimulating enough to find a place in anthologies of literary criticism. The only complaint about this book is the difficulty of making it lie flat on the piano without breaking its spine. Anybody interested in Elizabethan poetry and music should not miss it.

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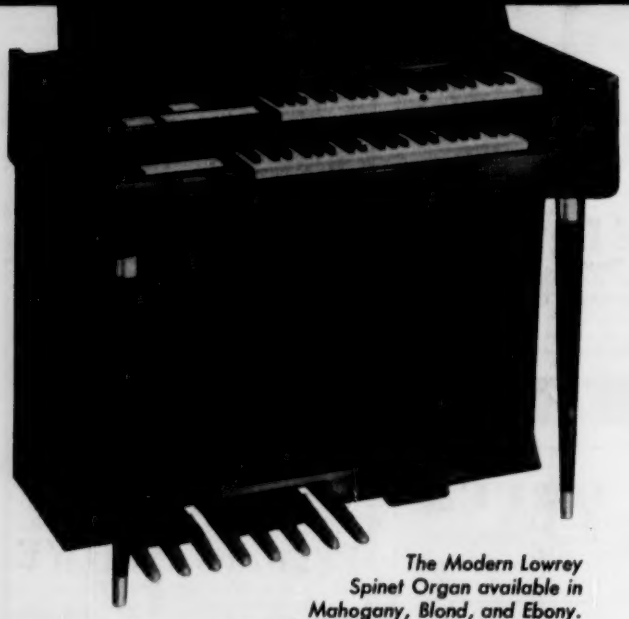

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